ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
3 9304 01037844 7

M
051
M52

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

TheMennonite

3145 Benham Avenue
Suite 4
Elkhart, IN 46517
Phone: 800-790-2498

AnnaG@TheMennonite.org
www.TheMennonite.org

Nov. 12, 2014

Colleen McFarland,
Director of Archives and Records Management
Mennonite Church USA
1700 S Main St
Goshen, IN 46526

Dear Colleen,
We are pleased to know that Mennonite Church USA has received a grant to digitize the print files of Gospel Herald and *The Mennonite.*

You have our full permission to digitize all issues of *The Mennonite* and make them available for free, with full-text access.

Best wishes in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.
The Anabaptist Mennonite Digital Collaborative, coordinated by staff at Mennonite Church USA, Goshen College, and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, is working with Internet Archive to provide digital copies of this title. Please seek permission from the copyright owner if your use of this item is not permitted under the license.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/mennonite1996111hous

Inside

A short history of race / p. 5

The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. / p. 10

A childhood story grows up / p. 12

$2.00

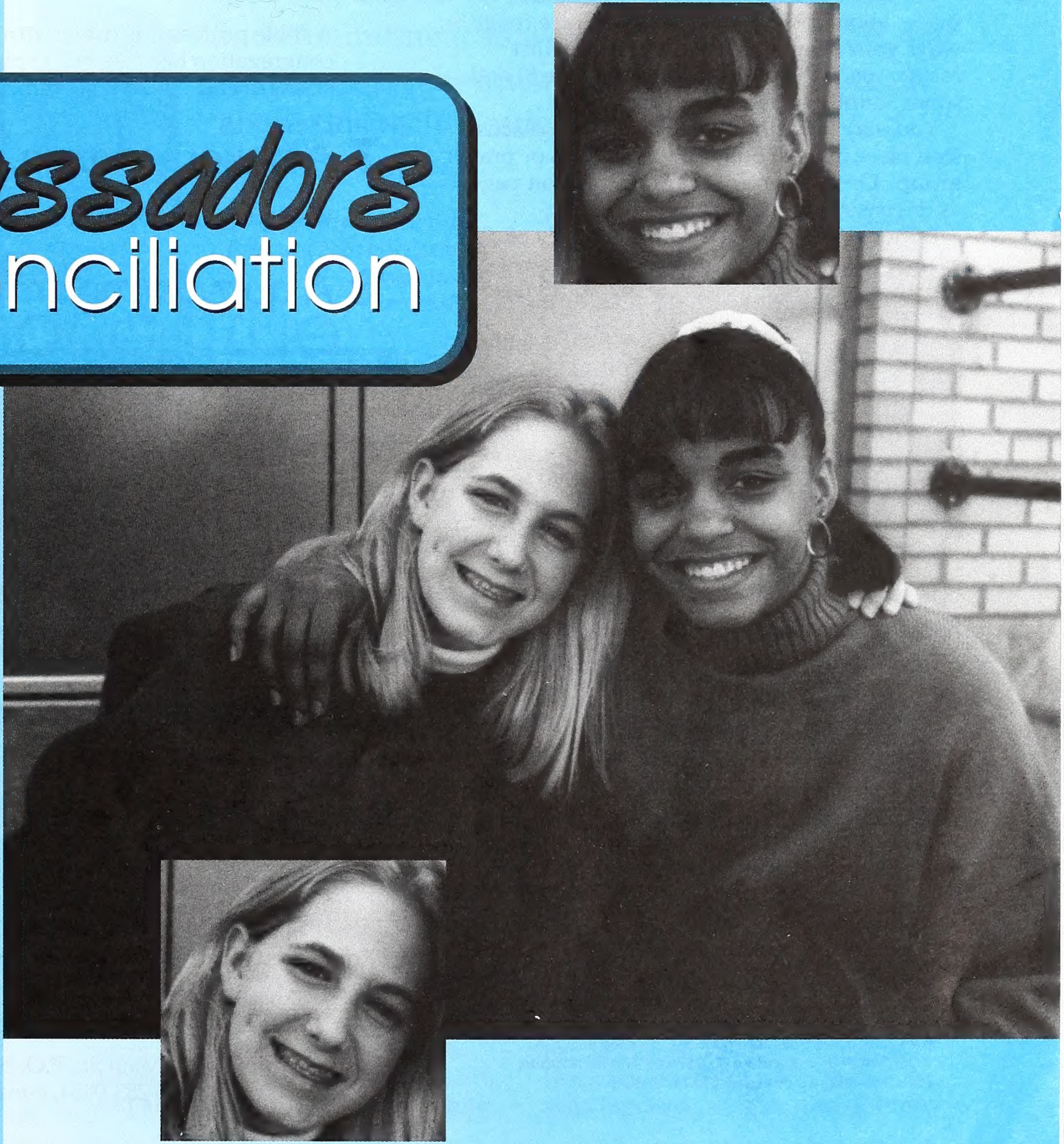
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 01
JANUARY 9. 1996

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
ELKHART
LIBRARY
JAN 15 '96

Ambassadors of reconciliation



In search of a true communion (see page 3)

A white convert to the black church (see page 6)

A quiz on racism (see page 8)

Prologue

One of the challenges our church faces as we seek to be faithful to God's Word is the pervasiveness of racism. When we talk about "Vision: Healing and Hope," we should keep in mind that there can be no healing, no hope, without racial reconciliation.

James Samuel Logan discusses this search for a true communion (page 3). He tells part of his own story and calls us to "live in community with those we consider the 'other.'"

Craig Keener tells how he became part of a black church at a time when he was hurting (page 6). There he found a rich source of healing and renewal.

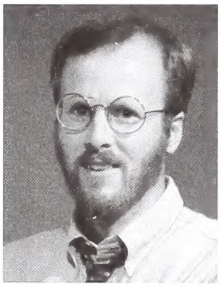
We've also included several informative pieces about race, on the history of race (page 5), ways your congregation can work against racism (page 7), a quiz on racism (page 8) and some Scriptures on racism (page 9).

You may want to use this issue for a discussion piece in your Sunday school class or prayer group. Or use some of the Scriptures on page 9 as the basis for a Bible study.

Donovan Smucker looks at the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., whose birthday we celebrate on Jan. 15 (see page 10).

And J.B. Miller relates the parable of the Good Samaritan to situations he faced that others may also face (page 12).

Pray with us that this coming year be one of reconciliation and hope. *gh*



Next issue: Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Calcutta

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

Contents

FEATURES

3 In search of a true communion

A call for the peace church to overcome its acquiescence to the racism of the surrounding culture

5 A short history of race

6 A white convert to the black church

A Bible professor is drawn to a black congregation because of its spiritual strength and the love he found there.

7 A baker's dozen

Ways your congregation can work against racism

8 A quiz on racism

DEPARTMENTS

10 Profile
11 Letters
12 Fiscal health
13 News
19 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Larry Penner

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail TheMennonite@gcmc.org

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

In search of a true communion

A call for the peace church to overcome its acquiescence to the racism of the surrounding culture

James Samuel Logan

I was born the second child of an unmarried teenage mother who, by the time she was 27, had conceived seven children by three different men. There was much misery for my mother and her children, and there was much love, compassion and commitment as well. My mother, to this day, continues, as she always has, to teach me much about this reality called life. I respect her and love her dearly.

While my mother did not conceive children within the context of the mythological two-parent, 2.5 children, all-American "Dream Team" family, she is as committed as any parent when it comes to nurturing and guiding her children in the path of dignity and self-worth.

My four sisters, two brothers and I grew up with my mother in Harlem and the South Bronx, N.Y. From about the age of 8 to about 17 I attended Camp Deerpark, which is owned and operated by the New York City Mennonite churches. This and other church-related experiences acquainted me with various peace church agencies.

In general I have been influenced, burdened, helped and hindered by people who find their personhood rooted in the Anabaptist tradition. Much of this interaction took place in and around Glad Tidings Mennonite Church in the Bronx, and at Seventh Avenue Mennonite Church in Harlem.

Inside the Anabaptist tradition I was affected by the words and writings of people like educators Hubert Brown and Zenebe Abebe, Spanish historian Rafael Falcon, theologian Jose Ortiz, Old Testament scholar Wilma Bailey, biologist and bishop Monroe Yoder, New Testament scholar Gertrude Roten and historian C.J. Dyck. These elders of our faith tradition, and others, helped me see clearly that the story of the African-American experience in the United States is also a part of the context for the peace church experience.

While it is clear to me that some portions of the peace church have become increasingly conscious and concerned about racism, I contend that our beloved Anabaptist community has more often than not been about the business of quietly acquiescing to the racism of the surrounding culture, and therefore participating in it.

In this century there has been the courage of what is now Allegheny Mennonite Conference to pass a strong resolution against the Ku Klux Klan in 1924 because of the Klan's discrimination against "Jews, Catholics and [African-Americans]." In that same year, however, another district confer-

Heckman 08/97.

> ***We, the peace church, must learn to respond to our devastating legacy of noninclusiveness with the same vigor with which we faced Hurricane Andrew and the Midwest floods, as well as the misery of the Rwandan crisis.***

ence encouraged the establishing of separate congregations for African-Americans and cautioned against "close social relations" or intermarriage (Dyck). It is this latter view, in various manifestations, that guides the core masses of today's peace church, at least as I interpret its history.

If we are to find the truth, we must create new models of community. We must "cultivate" the kinds of children, men and women who actualize new models of servanthood and love in the name of Christ.

Collusion: I mean models that question our peace church's silent assumptions about race—as well as class and gender. It will be crucial for the peace church to acknowledge its historical collusion in the sin of racism and then do something redemptive and sacrificial and reconciling and prophetic about it. The peace church must confess that when it comes to dealing forthrightly with the racism of its church institutions, it has too often hindered where it might have helped; been evasive when it was morally bound to be forthright; and in many instances continues to separate peace church believers on the basis of race, even though it has declared its mission to demonstrate God's love within the context of the Believers' Church.

Those representing dominant power in today's Anabaptist peace church too often forget about the loving, suffering and triumphant Christ of history. As a collective group, today's peace church tends to forget (or pretends to forget) that a move to realize the inclusion of gifts from all peace church constituents, regardless of race or ethnicity, is not a struggle that is happening for the first time in our church's history.

To say it more plainly—with nothing but love and a deep sense of sorrow—not only do most European-American Anabaptists generally not seem to care about making serious connections with the diverse cultures, traditions and histories of our current church structure in North America, they do not seem to care, beyond merely good intentions, about having critical masses of "other than white folks" as friends, acquaintances and colleagues in their daily lives. We, the peace church, must learn to respond to our devastating legacy of noninclusiveness with the same vigor with which we faced Hurricane Andrew and the Midwest floods, as well as the misery of the Rwandan crisis.

Ignorant bigots: If we as a people can enter situations and communities that are more multiracial and multiethnic, we might learn to reflect more clearly on words like those from Charles Lawrence in the *Stanford Law Review* (1987): "Racism in America is much more complex than either the conscious conspiracy of a power elite or the simple delusion of a few ignorant bigots. It is part of our common historical experience and, therefore, a part of our culture. [Racism continues to arise] from the assumptions we have learned to make about the world, ourselves, and others as well as from the patterns of our [most] fundamental social activities." Like when we go to church on Sunday morning.

It is tragic to know that for African-Americans the historical public meaning of Christianity in this nation justified, among other atrocities, bringing our forebears as human cargo from the shores of Mother Africa on ships with strange sounding names, such as "Gift of God," "Integrity" and "John the Baptist."

This brand of Christianity cannot be tolerated in the peace church today. As historian Vincent Harding once said, "Let us learn to listen and act upon some of the points of view of women and men who have heard

MCC photo

With love and sorrow: *James Logan*

vaguely that we [the peace church] have a witness concerning peace and reconciliation." Then we might truly represent the poor in spirit, the ones who mourn, the meek, the ones who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and the one(s) persecuted for righteousness sake.

Xenophobia: Increasingly we witness the collapse of spiritual communities—communities that help people love themselves and others, that help families and neighborhoods face despair, disease, life and death with love, dignity, commitment and decency. If we wish to be a meaningful presence in the face of our increasing nihilism and xenophobia, we, as Vincent Harding tried to tell the peace church in 1967, must, with fear and trembling, be willing to "be driven beyond all the limits of physical and intellectual and spiritual safety that we know now; then the anointing may come. Then the broken victims will leap for joy at our appearance, and the humiliated will sing a song of praise" (eighth Mennonite World Conference, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 1967).

Let us learn to live in community with those we consider the "other." Let us learn to make an understanding of diverse histories, cultures and experiences crucial to our faith perspective and to our development as human beings. Let us interact with one another as wine, old and mature, and as bread, freshly baked. Then, come Sunday, we may represent a true communion.

James Samuel Logan is coordinator for Community Ministries for Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Excerpted from a speech delivered at "A Gathering for Those Seeking to Challenge Racism in the Anabaptist Community," March 4, 1995. Reprinted from Urban Connections, *Fall 1995.*

A short history of race

The physical differences between populations of people struck early anthropologists as great and therefore requiring an evolutionary explanation. There were for a time debates over whether the different races of human beings had evolved from different apes, a theory known as 'polygenesis,' or from a single ape, a theory known as 'monogenesis.' It was Darwin who convinced the scientific community that humans all had a single ancestral origin. There followed a hundred years of attempts to identify classes of human beings, with labels such as 'Mongoloid,' 'Negroid' and 'Caucasoid,' an attempt largely futile in real scientific terms." *Eloise Hiebert Meneses,* Race and Ethnicity

1684	Race, as a category primarily denoting skin color, is first used to classify human bodies by Francois Bernier, a French physician.
1691	The first time "white" is used to designate a member of a specific group. Previously people were referred to by country of origin (Spanish, English, Irish, etc.).
1700s	The idea of race begins to supplant the designation of "Christians" and "heathens" as the fundamental division of the world.
1735	The first "authoritative" racial division of humankind is found in the influential *Natural Systems* by naturalist Carolus Linnaeus.
1775	Johann Friedrich Blumenbach sets out to classify the varieties of humankind and to discover any significance to the differences. He upholds the view that "boundaries between races were not determinable because of the plethora of criteria to be considered."
1794	The Brown Fellowship is established, admitting members of mixed heritage. A similar society in New Orleans, the Blue Vein Society, exists for those with skin color so light that blue veins can be seen. The term "colored" is used by the house servant children of white and black forebears to distinguish themselves from African field workers.
1830s	The term "colored" is more common in black leadership circles, partly in response to the American Colonization Society, which wants to send free blacks back to Africa. Integrationism and nationalism begin to rise over African identification.
1850s	Many theories of "scientific racism" are advanced.
1859	Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* is published and has obvious attraction for those who believe some races have a more exalted destiny than others.
1871	Darwin's book *The Descent of Man* espouses that nature will eliminate the "negro," and that "civilized races will exterminate the savage races throughout the world."
1939-45	During World War II the plasma of Negro blood is stored separately from that of Caucasian blood, although the two are chemically and every other way identical.
1992	North America's fastest-growing groups reject racial designations. Chinese, Japanese and Koreans choose to emphasize their separate national identities rather than evoke a common heritage.

Adapted from Rev. Lee Butler, untitled timeline; Paul Bohannan, Social Anthropology; *A. Leon Higginbotham Jr.,* In The Matter of Color; *Eloise Hiebert Meneses,* Race and Ethnicity; *and Andrew Hacker, "The Myths of Racial Division."*

Reprinted from Racism: A Worship Resource Packet *from Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, and Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.*

A *white* convert to the *black* church

A Bible professor is drawn to a black congregation because of its spiritual strength and the love he found there.

Craig Keener

I arrived in Durham, N.C., a broken man, still numb from the recent anguish of having been abandoned by my wife and despairing about my calling as a minister. I checked into a cheap motel that stood next to a group of red-brick apartment buildings.

"Don't go over there," the motel clerk warned me. "There're black people there, an' they'll kill you." Grimacing, I proceeded over to those apartments, hoping to run into someone, but no one was around.

The next morning I went back, thinking that perhaps someone preparing for church would invite me to come along. Three girls stood outside, so I went up and spoke to them. They took me to meet their grandmother, who answered my questions politely and then left for church—without inviting me. But when I returned that afternoon, one of the children ran up to me. "Grandma wants to speak with you," she said.

Grandma Josephine Johnson informed me that the Lord had told her that morning to invite me to church and offer me dinner. "I didn't do it then," she said, "but I'm gonna do it now."

After three platefuls of her delicious food, I began to get to know Grandma Johnson and the five grandchildren she was single-handedly raising. That night I went to church with the Johnsons, and the next morning I became their neighbor.

I wasn't accustomed to the lively worship I experienced that night and in following weeks, but being the cold, calculating Ph.D. student that I was, I reasoned that emotion was a good catharsis for families experiencing the painful conditions under which the Johnsons lived. But later I realized I needed the "catharsis" as much as the Johnsons did.

Although I had years of theological experience and biblical training behind me, I had wanted to die when my life became too painful. Yet the Johnson children, with their church's help, were coping better than I with conditions far more severe.

A few months later Grandma Johnson died, and Social Services placed all the children in different foster homes. I tried but could not locate the children.

Meanwhile, I returned to school and was soon learning new insights from my African-American friends at Duke. One friend's English professor had called him aside the first day of class and warned him to drop because, "You won't pass my class—and if you tell anyone I told you this, it will be your word against mine."

Horror stories: "Does this happen often?" I demanded, incredulous. He shook his head at my naivete and told me more horror stories. As a white Christian I could view race as one issue among many; but for many of my black brothers and sisters, it was the issue that confronted them every day.

I found myself drawn back to the black church, to its strength. Through centuries of perseverance in the face of unjust suffering, I saw how the black church had become a reservoir of spiritual strength. And I believed that heritage could become a source of renewal and healing to the whole church in America, white and black, if we'd let it.

I began attending Orange Grove Baptist Church in Durham, and the pastor, Carl Kenney, brought me on staff. Some members were suspicious of my motives at first, but in time the whole congregation embraced me.

As I studied African-American history, I realized what it meant for the people of Orange Grove to embrace me—the depth of Christian love and trust they were extending. I wept at the history of our races' interaction and grew so ashamed of my color that I wanted to rip my skin off.

Corporate guilt: But as Pastor Kenney continued preaching about our oneness in Christ, I grasped afresh the cross's message—that Jesus died for corporate as well as personal guilt. I had become so angry with the deception that keeps much of white society indifferent to racial realities that I found myself having to repent again for my racial barriers—this time against white people.

One day I received a call. "Craig, it's Tramika!" the young lady said. She was one of the Johnson grandchildren. I'd left my number with some members of their old church, and she had located me. I learned from Tramika that she had recently been reunited with all her sisters, but she had been waiting to see her "long-lost brother"—and she was talking about me.

As a white Christian I could view race as one issue among many; but for many of my black brothers and sisters, it was the issue that confronted them every day.

A source of renewal: *The Orange Grove Baptist Church choir sings as pastor Craig Keener keeps time in the pulpit.*

What healing strength God's church has missed by allowing us brothers and sisters to be lost to one another for so long. People like the Johnson family, Pastor Kenney and my friends at Duke reached out to me, in spite of traditional racial boundaries and cultural differences, to draw me into a richer inner circle of unity and understanding. They let me into their hearts and lives in a way that strengthened me and truly enhanced my understanding of the gospel's reconciling message.

Craig Keener is professor of New Testament at Hood Theological Seminary, an AME Zion Church affiliated school. He is also author of The IVP Bible Background Commentary *(Inter Varsity). This article is reprinted from the Spring 1995 issue of* The Reconciler, *P.O. Box 32, Jackson, MS 39205.*

A baker's dozen:

Ways your congregation can work against racism

1. Partner with a congregation of color on a common mission project.
2. Learn about your own ethnic background.
3. Educate yourself about the history and cultures of people of color in your community.
4. Encourage church members to work with the human relations committee in your community as they investigate discrimination in housing, banking or employment.
5. Publicly support legislation that assures that everyone is protected against discrimination in housing and employment.
6. Support organizations working for a good education for all children, not just your own.
7. Ask your conference body to either appoint a new committee or ask an existing one to help the whole congregation deal with both personal and institutional racism.
8. Patronize businesses owned by people of color and seek help from professionals of color—doctors, dentists, lawyers.
9. Publicly oppose all efforts by hate groups to intimidate people of color. For example, the Ku Klux Klan announced that it would march in a college town. Students organized a fair on their campus to celebrate ethnic diversity and invited the entire town for the day of the march. When the KKK marched, no one was in town. They were all at the fair.
10. Include study of racism in your youth and adult Sunday school curriculum.
11. Worship with a congregation from a different ethnic group several times a year.
12. Encourage churchwide bodies to make resources available to all congregations on a sliding fee scale.
13. Gather regularly for prayer that we might find healing from the wounds of racism.

Sources: "Breaking Down the Walls: Responding to the Racism that Divides Us," Virgil Cruz and Jean Cooley (Presbyterian Church, 1992), Enter the River: Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation *by Jody Miller Shearer (Herald Press, 1994)*

Reprinted from Racism: A Worship Resource Packet *from Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, and Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9*

A quiz on racism

1. Who are you most likely to be victimized by?
   a. A person of another race
   b. A person of your own race
   c. Race is not a factor

2. In which country were people of Japanese descent rounded up and put in detention camps in spite of military opposition?
   a. China
   b. Canada
   c. United States

3. Which cost the most?
   a. 1991 street crime
   b. Looting during the Los Angeles rebellions in May 1992
   c. Savings and loan banking misappropriation

4. Who led rebellions that helped establish a short-lived provisional government that attempted to resist English domination in the settlement of the Canadian West?
   a. Louis Riel
   b. Crazy Horse
   c. Henry Bibb

5. Which group was referred to by the media as "misguided youths"?
   a. Boys from Howard Beach, N.Y., who killed one man and beat two others for being in their neighborhood after dark
   b. Boys from New Jersey who gang-raped a special education student
   c. Boys from East Harlem, New York City, who assaulted and raped a woman jogging in New York's Central Park

6. Which U.S. national figure bought land on which to build his future retirement home and signed a contract that he would not "sell, lease or rent" that land to anyone from a different race?
   a. Jesse Jackson
   b. Ronald Reagan
   c. George Bush

7. In which city did 25 Mennonite men form a section of the Nationalist Party of Canada, a pro-Nazi organization?
   a. Elmira, Ont.
   b. Winkler, Man.
   c. Rosthern, Sask.

8. Who is called the "Flame-Shooting Feather-Topped Foot Fighter"?
   a. A befeathered member of the World Wrestling Federation
   b. A member of AIM (American Indian Movement)
   c. A Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle

9. Which production company made a movie with these lyrics?
   Oh, I come from a land
   From a faraway place
   Where the caravan camels roam.
   Where they cut off your ear
   If they don't like your face
   It's barbaric, but hey, it's home.
   a. Orion
   b. MGM
   c. Disney

10. During which television season were there more extraterrestrials than Native Americans, Hispanics and Asians combined on prime time?
    a. Fall 1990
    b. Fall 1985
    c. Fall 1980

Answers to quiz

1. b Most white people are victimized by white people (70 percent in the United States). Most black people are victimized by black people (80 percent in the United States). *Source: "Percent Distribution of Single-Offender Victimizations Based on Race of Victims, by Type of Crime and Perceived Race of Offender," Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1990 (U.S. Department of Justice, Office Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics)*

2. b In 1942, after the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor, Japanese Canadians were herded to inland detention camps even though the RCMP and the Canadian military insisted that Japanese Canadians were not a security risk. Homes, land, fishing boats, tables, chairs and children's toys were taken away and sold. In 1988, the Canadian government made reparations. *Source:* Confessions of a Jailbird: The Anti-Racism Comic Book, *Bob Haverluck, Winnipeg*

3. c Looting during the Los Angeles rebellions cost $750 million. Street crime during 1991 cost $14.9 billion. Savings and loan misappropriation (looting) cost $450 billion. *Source: National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus (June 1992)*

4. a Louis Riel (1844-1885), a Metis (mixed Native and French) from Assiniboia, Man. He was tried and hanged in Regina, Sask., on Nov. 16, 1885. Crazy Horse was an Oglala Lakota warrior of great renown. He once said, "One does not sell the land upon which the people walk." Henry Bibb was leader of Canada's black population in the 1850s. *Source: Mennonite Church/General Conference Mennonite Church statement, "A Church of Many Peoples Confronts Racism," Aug. 6, 1989; Vincent Harding,* There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America *(Random House, 1981)*

5. a & b The white boys from Howard Beach (who killed black men) and the white middle-class boys from New Jersey (who raped a white girl) were referred to as misguided youths. The

Answers to quiz *continued*

black boys from East Harlem were referred to as "wolves," "savages" and "mutants." *Source: Martin A. Lee and Norma Solomon,* Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media *(Carol Publishing Group, 1991)*

6. c On Feb. 4, 1981, after he became vice president, George Bush bought a lot in West Oaks, Texas, as the site of a future home in an all-white community. Bush signed a contract with a clause that the land could not "be sold, leased or rented to any person other than of the Caucasian race, except in the servant's quarters." He has signed several other similar deeds since the 1950s. Bush's spokesperson said, "There's really nothing to this." *Source:* Unreliable Sources

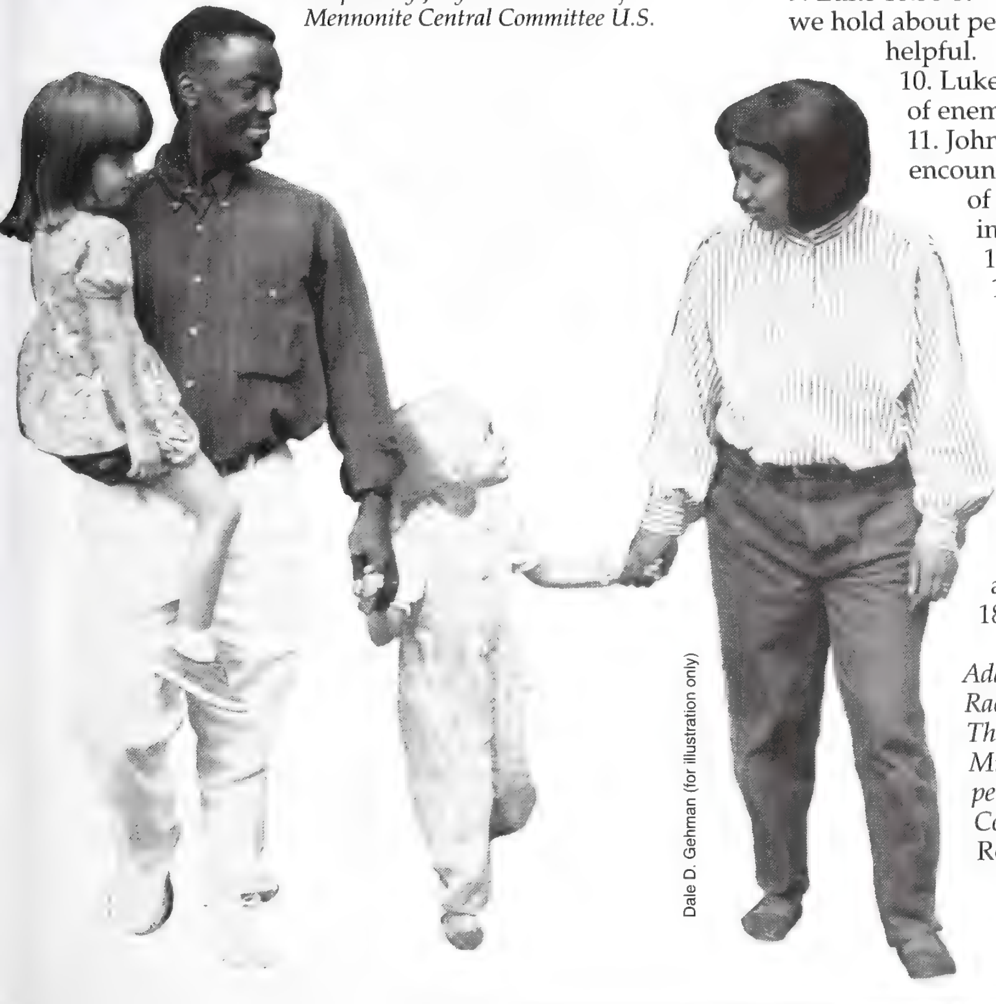
7. b In Winkler, Man., during the 1940s, 25 Mennonite men formed the District 2, Number 1 section of the Nationalist Party of Canada, a pro-Nazi organization. According to Harry Loewen, chair of Manitoba's coalition against racism and apartheid, they "met regularly to discuss fascism, practice Nazi salutes and … distributed and printed hard-core hate literature." *Source: Mennonite Weekly Review, June 17, 1993*

8. c "Chief Leo" is a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle figure. This figure and other "Indian kitsch" are highly offensive to Native people because of their implicit insensitivity toward Native religious and cultural traditions. *Source: Indian Country Today, Aug. 25, 1993*

9. c Lyrics from *Aladdin.* After a protest, Disney changed the lyrics for the video version of the film.

10. a *Source: UPI and AP wire stories*

Compiled by Jody Miller Shearer for Mennonite Central Committee U.S.



Dale D. Gehman (for illustration only)

Some Scriptures on the subject of racism

Old Testament

1. Exodus 2:1-14—An example of how we learn not only about God in Scripture, but also about ourselves
2. Exodus 23:9—Sarah/Hagar
3. Leviticus 19:33-34
4. Ruth—It is the sensitivity and humility of females that overcome the potential racism and hopelessness in their lives.
5. Psalm 51
6. Psalm 67—Includes a prayer that "God's saving health might be known among all nations"
7. Isaiah 25:6-8—The vision of a great feast "for all peoples"
8. Isaiah 58:1-9
9. Isaiah 61:1-9
10. Jonah—A religious tract calling for compassion toward those considered outside salvation
11. Micah 3:1-4
12. Micah 6:8

New Testament

1. Matthew 7:21-23
2. Matthew 15:21-28—Who are the dogs in today's world?
3. Matthew 20:1-16
4. Matthew 25:31-46
5. Mark 3:1-26—Moving out of your safety zones
6. Mark 7:24-30—Jesus responds positively to the faith of a Syrophoenician woman.
7. Luke 4:16-30—Jesus' manifesto and his insistence that the Good News was not just for a particular "in-group"
8. Luke 10:30-37 and Luke 17:11-19—Jesus notes exemplary conduct in Samaritans, unorthodox people of mixed blood.
9. Luke 10:30-37—Jesus uses this story to teach that ideas we hold about people we feel are inferior racially are not helpful.
10. Luke 22:14-27—The Lord's Supper was a "feast of enemies" initiated by Jesus.
11. John 4:1-42—Through Jesus' redeeming encounter with a Samaritan woman, the people of her city announce about Jesus "that this is indeed the Savior of the World."
12. John 17:20-23
13. Acts 10:9-35—Peter's vision, which led to the conclusion, "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."
14. Romans 15:5-7
15. Galatians 3:26-28—"You are all one in Christ Jesus."
16. Ephesians 4:3-6
17. 1 Timothy 2:3—"God … who desires all … to be saved."
18. Revelation 5:9-10

Adapted from "Some Scriptures on the Subject of Racism" in Moving Beyond Racism, *© 1988, The United Church of Canada, Division of Mission Canada, Toronto, Canada. Reprinted by permission and found in Mennonite Central Committee's* Racism: A Worship and Resource Packet.

The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

His words and actions wedded realism and hope.

Donovan E. Smucker

Truth is hammered out on the anvil of history. That rugged metaphor is the explanation of Martin Luther King Jr.'s outstanding place in the 20th century. In the 39th year of his eventful life (1929-1968) he was struck down by an assassin's bullet. During those years he discovered insights still relevant to us today.

There is, of course, a particular context for his life and work. Radical contextualists see this as a limiting factor in relation to any insights of permanent worth. Growing up in the black South of the United States and finding himself thrust into leadership of the bus boycott in Montgomery, Ala., are the crucial factors in this setting for his work. The giants of history, however, transcend context, even though they are a part of it.

King's insights and permanent truths did not spring up in some epiphany. They were indeed hammered out on the anvil of history. King was not a simple man, as a rereading of his classic "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" reveals. Often we forget that he had a Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston University. In "Letter" he quotes Tillich, Buber, St. Augustine, Plato, St. Thomas, T.S. Eliot and the Bible. But his intellectualism took second place to concrete encounters with social reality.

After feeling despondent regarding the resilient power structure of Montgomery, he observed (reflecting on experience): "I left the meeting despondent but soon saw that I was the victim of an unwarranted pessimism because I started with an unwarranted optimism … this experience taught me a lesson. I came to see that no one gives up his power without strong resistance."

With that new insight in relation to power King showed the world an increasingly effective nonviolent resistance that did not seek to destroy, injure or reject the enemy. Instead he showed a method that was rugged, that permitted a massive appeal to the conscience of the adversary. After power was equalized in the demonstration, it was possible to transcend the almost hopeless web of hate and hurt. That web still surrounds struggles in Northern Ireland and the Middle East.

He knew the power structure had to be challenged by an equal or superior power. But he did not reveal naked, bloody power. He spoke the words of truth and love to power in order to transform the relationships of power.

A million people: King also established a new relationship between realism and hope. No great social movement can arise that fails to combine a realistic, "de facto" grasp of what the issues are about. Neither can a great movement develop that does not include hope for change—a hope that is almost a utopian dream for tomorrow. That is why his "I Have a Dream" speech before a million people at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington sent the people in wild outbursts of joy. (I was there to experience it.)

RNS

An increasingly effective nonviolent resistance: *In this 1965 photo, Martin Luther King Jr. turns his back on a wall of troopers that barred his entrance to Alabama's State Capitol.*

He spoke the words of truth and love to power in order to transform the relationships of power.

At the end of "Letter" he declared, "Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from fear-drenched communities and in the not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of brotherhood will shine over the nation with all their beauty."

Martin Luther King's analysis of law is a brilliant achievement. When he was rebuked for civil disobedience he established the distinction (with the help of St. Augustine and St. Thomas) between just and unjust laws, saying with Augustine that an unjust law was no law at all. His criteria, as at many points, were religious. He would judge the justice of laws by the moral law of God.

To protect himself against the possibility of a totally legalistic approach, King still understood the difference between law and love. He said that desegregation is the work of law in which nonviolent power brings about change. But integration is the work of love when people actually change in their attitudes and motivations.

All in all, this part of his legacy was the work of a man in the midst of history capable of perceptive analysis.

Another of his great achievements was restoring nonviolence as a central part of Christian ethics. Although a trip to India brought the legacy of Gandhi into his thinking, brought structure and tactics into focus, King believed that the New Testament was a strongly pacifist book that gave the Christian pacifist the possibility of struggle without bitterness and hate. King viewed the collapse of this conviction with the political settlement of Constantine in the Roman Empire of the early fourth century as one of the great tragedies of history. He was eager to break the alliance between the cross and the sword.

Street marchers: It is difficult for people in this era to grasp the significance of the black church in King's restatement of nonviolence. The black church was physically available as a meeting place. When the meeting took place it had an emotional and an intellectual content. The lilting rhythms of the singing, the dramatic power of the preaching, the antiphonal response of the people made it a great exercise in appealing to the human will for action. People left the church not as sleepwalkers but street marchers.

Finally, we must not forget the abuse King endured because he linked a profound analysis of the Vietnam conflict with civil rights. On April 4, 1967, he preached a powerful sermon at Riverside Church in New York in which he labeled the United States "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today" and accused it of "cruel manipulation of the poor." He noted that the people of Vietnam "watch as we poison their water and kill a million acres of their crops." The older civil rights leaders among the blacks lashed out at him for mixing anti-war, anti-Vietnam messages with civil rights. He never wavered, knowing that a holistic view of history is the mark of those who understand the realities of the 20th century.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a theoretician and a man of action. He was a profound student of social institutions. He embodied the spirits of Jesus and Gandhi. He wedded realism to hope. He restored nonviolence as central to Christianity and he showed the church how to be involved with life.

Secular and religious people still have much to learn from one of the few Ph.D.s whose dissertation jumped off the library shelf into the pain and passion of history.

Donovan E. Smucker lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

Letters

TRIBUTE TO ERNST HARDER

Thanks for publishing the tribute to Ernst Harder (Nov. 28 issue, page 12). Ernst was my pastor and friend when I lived in Dallas from 1985-87. Robert Kreider's tribute touches on his experience in Texas, but much more can be said about how he was instrumental in helping the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship (now Peace Mennonite Church) to create the Dallas Peace Center and to offer programs that provided services to hundreds (maybe thousands) of Central American refugees. As a former director of the peace center, I benefited directly from his vision and support.

Much could also be said about how Ernst nurtured and cared for a small, sometimes struggling, urban congregation in Dallas. That Peace Mennonite Church continues to serve and witness today is also a part of his legacy. *John Longhurst, Winnipeg*

WHO IS JESUS?

The recent correspondence about the Trinity may be about words merely, or it may be about realities. Those who object to the term divine "person" as unbiblical or inadequate will find themselves in good company, for almost every major theologian of the Christian church has admitted the same.

On the other hand, this difference may be about the realities themselves. Trinity language has always followed the question, "Who is Jesus?" Is he eternal God, worthy of all worship, object of prayer, just as his heavenly Father is God? If Jesus is God, then we must choose between polytheism or some form of Trinitarian terminology. If Jesus is not God, then the apostles were false witnesses and, as Bunyan put it, "Heaven will be full of idolaters." *Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Colombia—Margarita is the poorest member of the La Mesa Mennonite Church. To support her two teenage children, her granddaughter and herself, she sells meat turnovers and shish kebabs along the highway. Her small cart proclaims her faith, "Cristo Vive" (Christ lives). Margarita is the only person I know who not only believes but practices the belief that her time, money and possessions belong to God.

In a way, Margarita has adopted us as her children. She has included us in Christmas, New Year's and Easter celebrations, brought us food when we've been sick, arrived on our doorstep with cake on our birthdays and made sure we've tasted all typical Colombian food.

Margarita not only gives freely to us but to many others. Often I've seen her feed street people, show up at church with snacks for the congregation, or offer to provide a meal for a church function. She gives of her time, energy and the little she has and miraculously continues to put food on her children's plates and pay their way through school.

Reflecting on my friendship with Margarita as Christmas approaches makes me think about gifts and gift-giving. Why do we give gifts? Why do we mostly give gifts on special days? Why do we so often give gifts to people who have little need of them? What about those who really are in need? I worry that giving to those in need will create dependency. But to what degree is that just an excuse not to give? Among our friends here in Colombia, it is an accepted fact that everyone will experience times of great need, when there will not be enough to keep food on the table. People give freely to others knowing that their turn will also come, when they will need the generosity of others. Margarita lives a lifestyle of giving. What is our lifestyle?

I continue to struggle with these questions. However, I need to remember that what I have belongs to God, and I need to learn to give freely of myself to others. *Julie Moyer Suderman*

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

A childhood story grows up

The parable of the Good Samaritan continues to challenge our behavior.

J.B. Miller

One of my favorite stories as a child was the parable of the Good Samaritan. Long before television and videos, I remember sitting in Sunday school and Bible school watching flannelgraph interpretations of what took place between the Good Samaritan and the robbery victim. Each teacher gave the story a slightly different nuance, so it never grew old.

My parents and my church community were also Good Samaritans. My father always made sure our poorer neighbors had wood for the stove and blankets for cold winter nights.

Today the Good Samaritan story is still one of my favorites because it has so much to teach us about how we should respond to the needy among us. If Christ were to come back today and tell the story, it wouldn't need much updating. No doubt the Good Samaritan would be driving through a dangerous part of town, where he would see a car stalled beside the road. Does the Good Samaritan stop or go on? If he stops, he might get robbed. Worse yet, he might get caught in the cross fire of warring gangs.

Three events happened recently that I think about often. I won't tell you what I did in each case, but you may want to decide what you would have done, given the same circumstances.

Event #1: I was driving along a familiar city street on a cold, rainy, autumn day. I stopped at a traffic light to wait for it to turn green. As I did, I glanced to the left and noticed a well-dressed man standing in the rain without an umbrella. He was staring at me, and for an instant our eyes met. The next thing I knew he was tapping on my car window asking, "Can you give me a ride to Main Street?"

Main Street was a half-mile away, I was going right to it, and I was alone in the car with plenty of room for a rider. It was broad daylight. City bus service ran right by where he was standing. Should I risk picking up this stranger, or should I pass by on the other side?

Event #2: I was having lunch at a local fast-food restaurant. Soon after I began eating a hamburger and fries, a young man, probably in his early 30s, put something on my table and placed the same item on each of the other tables in the crowded dining room. It was a small four-page leaflet that said, "Please buy this dictionary of sign language. I am deaf, and any money you can pay for this book will be greatly appreciated." The man distributing the leaflet appeared to be in excellent physical health, except that he was wearing hearing aids. I was eating lunch in a town that has a low unemployment rate. Could selling seemingly worthless leaflets be considered a job? Should I reach into my pocket and pull out a quarter or a dollar, or should I ignore his stare when he comes back to pick up money or the leaflet?

> ***Dropping money in the offering basket to help the poor in Bosnia is not enough. If I truly want to be a Good Samaritan, what do I do?***

Event #3: I was doing Christmas shopping, and when I came out into the parking lot on a snowy, miserably cold evening, a man dressed in clothes that made him look like an auto mechanic approached me carrying a tool and a broken belt. He was polite when he began talking to me. He said the fan belt in his truck had broken, and he needed $4 more to buy a new one. "I live out in the next town, and if you give me your address, I will be glad to drop the $4 in the mail to you this evening."

In the days of credit cards and automatic teller machines, one right in front of us, should I reach in my pocket and hand over the $4, or do I tell him, "Sorry, I can't help you tonight," even though I knew that would be a lie. I could help him if I wanted to.

Of all the events in my life that cause me to reflect on Christ's teachings, it is my encounters with those in need that I think about the most. Maybe it's because I have so much compared with so many people in the world—even in the United States, for that matter.

Maybe it's because the Bible speaks so much about how we need to help the poor among us. Do we ignore the needy because we think the government will take care of them? If government policies change so that the poor are not as well cared for, will I be willing to step into the breach? Will I give more and be a safety net if there is less government help available for them?

J. Daryl Byler, director of the Washington Office of Mennonite Central Committee U.S., wrote recently, "We do well to acknowledge our tendency to distance ourselves from the poor. As a general rule, the more we have, the more we tend to isolate and insulate ourselves from those who don't have—partly to protect what we have, partly because we don't like to be reminded of the needs of others. The face of poverty in a far-off land is much less threatening than poverty close at hand."

These are powerful words. I now know that dropping money in the offering basket to help the poor in Bosnia is not enough. If I truly want to be a Good Samaritan, what do I do?

By the way, if you want to know what I did in each of the three events, you may call me at 1-800-348-7468, and we can discuss it.

News

Denver chosen for City on a Hill

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church has named the Denver metropolitan area as its 1996 City on a Hill.

CHM started the City on a Hill project in 1994 to recognize, support and develop Mennonite urban church work that models a holistic approach to the gospel.

During 1996, Mennonite congregations in the Denver area will receive a $20,000 U.S. grant and resources from CHM staff as a result of the City on a Hill designation.

"The Denver area churches are excited about the new ministry opportunities that can become a reality because of City on a Hill," says Steve Goering, a pastor at Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church. "City on a Hill, with its promise of conference-wide prayer and CHM staff assistance, will make a critical difference. The Denver area churches wish to express their thanks to the General Conference—its staff and people everywhere—for this affirmation and ask for continuing prayers in this next year."

Goering says that City on a Hill will help support proposed initiatives such as a Hmong church-planting project in Arvada, Colo., and an Abraham and Sarah Caravan to help with a building program at Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora, Colo. It will also strengthen established projects like the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit, Denver Mennonite Urban Ministry and victim offender reconciliation programs, he says. Most outreach ministries in the Denver area receive support not only from GC congregations but also from those belonging to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Brethren.

CHM gave City on a Hill resources to Mennonite churches in the metropolitan area of Toronto in 1995 and Fresno, Calif., in 1994. Urban Mennonite churches in the United States and Canada that combine evangelism, peace and service in their witness can apply individually or in groups for future City on a Hill resourcing by contacting CHM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

$250,000 center dedicated in South Korea

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MCC)—Approximately 60 people attended the dedication of a $250,000 U.S. Anabaptist center near Hwachon, South Korea, Nov. 10, 1995. Called the Shalom House, the new building is located in a mountain valley about three hours from Seoul, South Korea, and close to the North Korean border.

About a dozen people live in simple dwellings near the Shalom House. They are part of Abba Shalom Koinonia, an intentional Anabaptist community started by Yoon-Sik Lee in 1987. Individuals from Seoul and other parts of South Korea have also participated in the community for shorter periods of time.

Through the Shalom House, Lee hopes to offer Bible training, youth ministry courses, service opportunities and a setting for prayer, meditation and healing. He studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, during the 1993-94 school year.

The community's long-term goal is to plant Anabaptist churches in South Korea and North America. In buildings close to the Shalom House there are a chapel, dining room and library.

Ann Martin, East Asia director for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and Larry Kehler, secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church, brought greetings at the dedication.

Ecumenical support: Martin was impressed with the inclusive nature of the gathering, noting that army officers, local pastors, university students and urban activists were among those present. "Lee doesn't want to just hang up another denominational shingle. He is trying to build bridges," she says.

The community has received substantial financial support from members of the Sangdo Presbyterian Church, Seoul, where Lee once worked as an associate pastor. The senior pastor there is Lee Bong Kim,

Inside the news

First West Bank mediation center opens doors / p. 15

Stewardship project builds theology of money / p. 16

Future of Institute of Mennonite Studies unknown / p. 17

AMBS to host mission institute / p. 18

MCC sends aid to Afghanistan / p. 18

Scott Watkins of Prince of Peace Mennonite Church, Anchorage, Alaska, was baptized in an icy Mier Lake Oct. 15 near Wasilla, Alaska. After graduating from Eastern Mennonite University in 1995, Scott headed to Alaska for work. Baptized as an infant in the Episcopal Church, he sought a believer's baptism this past fall as a symbol of faith.

* * *

A visiting South African last November told Canadian Christians to "get out of the cocoon of complacency" and fight injustice. Morontshi Matsobane, a conflict management worker in South Africa, spent several days in Manitoba as part of a three-week speaking tour arranged by Mennonite Central Committee. "You have the resources; you can make a difference," says Matsobane, who served a 12-year prison sentence on Robbin Island for opposing his country's apartheid system. Matsobane urged Canadian churches to follow the example of South African churches in their stand against apartheid. Throughout his Canadian visit he heard media reports about Aboriginal peoples' concerns. "Can we hear what is being said by the Native people?" he asks. "What can the church do about it?" He says architects of apartheid visited Canada in the 1940s and 1950s to study Aboriginal reserves and the Canadian government's response to people who are not part of mainstream society.

Christian Peacemaker Teams personnel in Hebron, West Bank, have called attention to the detainment of Jewish Israelis in Hebron who have opposed the Oslo peace accords. The CPT group in Hebron has long supported Palestinian rights in the area. "While CPT supports the efforts of Israeli police to prevent dangerous people from attacking either Israelis or Palestinians, we do not support denying either Israelis or Palestinians their rights given to them under international law," says a CPT release.

• • •

Women gather twice each week at Harris Hill Mennonite Church, Williamsville, N.Y., for an "uplifting" workout at their Christian Music Step Aerobics Class. Linda Klippenstein, the instructor, started the class in fall 1994. "The women who come here tend to be women who want to exercise but who don't want to be in the race of wearing the nicest leotard," she said. "They don't want to feel the competition [of a health club]." During breaks in the class, Klippenstein reads a devotional. A prayer concludes each class. (*The Clarence Bee*)

• • •

Retiring Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary professor Ross Bender has donated a large portion of his library to Good News Theological College and Seminary in Accra, Ghana. The Rev. Ezekiel Nartey, professor of Christian education at Good News, who recently completed studies at AMBS, approached Bender during the last school year about donating books to Good News. Bender invited Nartey to choose texts from his library. Nartey chose about 800 volumes, including Mennonite works, Christian education and general theological works, plus *Mennonite Quarterly Review* periodicals dating back to the 1950s. Bender remarked to his wife Ruth, "Now we're missionaries after all."

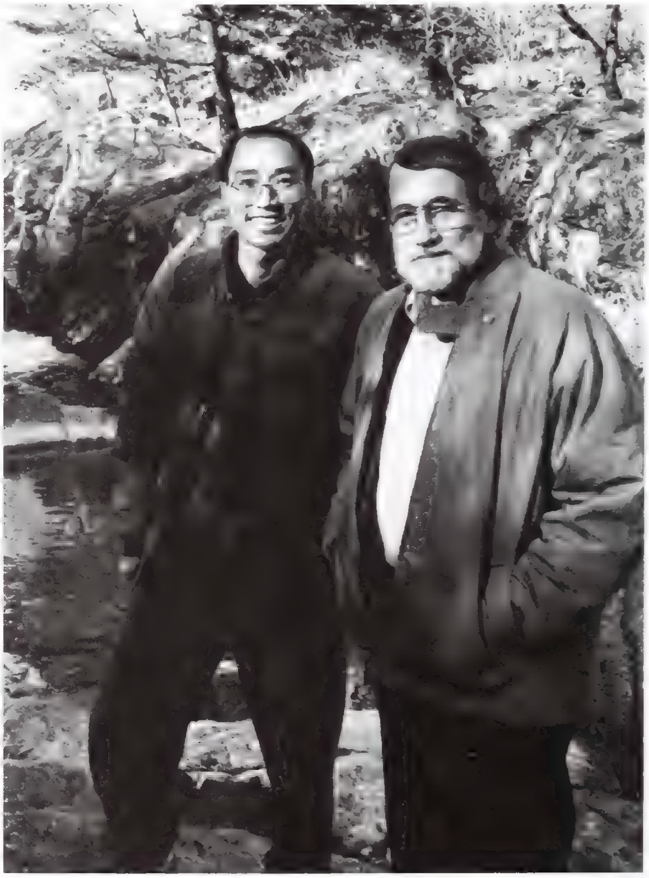
who served as the chaplain at the former MCC-operated Mennonite Vocational School in Taegu, South Korea.

Kim told Martin and Kehler that MCC left "a good legacy" through its work in South Korea. A total of 455 teenage boys lived in community at the school, which was open from 1953 to 1973. Many now work in the field of business or education. One of the graduates, a university dean and professor, asked Martin and Kehler to present a lecture about Anabaptism to a group of theology students.

Abba Shalom Koinonia, says Martin, is a fulfillment of Kim's dreams. Lee first learned about Anabaptism through his contact with Kim and lectures by Burton Yost, retired Bluffton (Ohio) College professor, during the 1980s.

Hungry for renewal: Lee believes Christians in his country are eager for renewal. He thinks the Anabaptist vision will meet their hunger for a deeper, more demanding faith. Christians account for about one-quarter of South Korea's 45 million people.

One businessman was attracted to Abba Shalom Koinonia because he was cured of stomach cancer through its prayer and healing ministry. He consequently accepted Christ and is now struggling with whether it is possible for him to be a Christian and work in the securities field.



Ann Martin

U.S.-Korea partnership: *Kehler and Lee*

Many university students, such as Myong-Hui Kim, have visited the community. She is a member of a Methodist church and leader of an InterVarsity Fellowship chapter.

Demilitarized zone: In addition to the Anabaptist emphasis on community and discipleship, Lee thinks the peace message is also relevant, especially given the political realities of everyday life in Korea.

The community-owned property, for example, is located near the demilitarized zone. According to the Associated Press, the Korean border is the most heavily armed in the world, with 2 million troops present from North Korea and South Korea.

It is not only the present-day politics that have taken a toll on the Korean people. The past has left scars as well. Lee's father, for example, traveled from North Korea to South Korea just before the Korean War started. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, his father was no longer able to return home and, as a result, he never saw his family again. "I think this is one of the reasons the peace message has gripped Lee," says Martin.

"Lee is not interested in a pie-in-the-sky type of peace," she says, noting that another one of his goals is to have an international camp for Asian youth so "they can come and live together in a Christian environment without tension and conflict." He also hopes to reach out to the army troops.

On one occasion several years ago, Lee agreed to let the South Korean military camp on the community-owned property for a few nights under the condition that he would be allowed to witness to the troops.

"A few years ago, we were told, it was difficult to talk about peace without being suspected of communist sympathies. Now there seems to be room to talk," says Kehler.

MCC, COM and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church relate to Abba Shalom Koinonia. The three organizations provided financial support for Lee's studies in Canada.

The community has a need for short-term and long-term workers who could teach classes about the Anabaptist faith. The group also has requested financial assistance for the Shalom House. They have paid for $100,000 (U.S.) of the cost to date. *Carla Reimer*

Big business, bad government

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MCC)—Both Larry Kehler and Ann Martin were struck by the infrastructure in South Korea, as well as the relative affluence, when they visited this country last November. High-speed railways and expressways are commonplace, they said. A strong domestic car industry also has had an impact—there are 2 million cars in Seoul, a city of 10 million.

But at the same time, the two North American Mennonites were constantly reminded of the political tensions that have been status quo on the Korean peninsula for the last 40 years.

Just a week before they arrived, several North Koreans, who were suspected of being spies, had been captured and shot when they crossed over the demilitarized zone into South Korea. The two also heard frequent references to the approximately 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea. They were told that, while many older Koreans welcomed the U.S. presence, many younger people resented it.

Their visit also coincided with the disclosure that ex-president Roh Tae Woo had amassed a slush fund of $654 million during his 1988-1993 presidency. Woo's tearful apology did little to stop public outrage.

Kehler is the secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Martin is the East Asia director for Mennonite Central Committee.
Carla Reimer

First mediation center in West Bank opens

Jerusalem (MCC)—The first conflict resolution center in the West Bank opened its doors in March with the help of Mennonite Central Committee.

Called "Wi'am" ("cordial relationship" in Arabic), the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center in Bethlehem combines the traditional Arab form of conflict resolution—called "sulha"—with Western models of conflict management. Since its March opening the center has helped resolve disputes in the Palestinian community by offering emergency mediation, training in conflict management and literature in Arabic on conflict resolution. The center also supports women who are victims of domestic violence.

According to Wi'am's director, Zoughbi Zoughbi, one irony arising from the recent peace agreements is that Palestinians are experiencing a rise in conflict.

"Most Palestinians have not yet tasted any fruits of the peace process, and people's frustration is increasing," says Zoughbi, a Palestinian Christian from Bethlehem who earned his peace studies degree at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind.

After 28 years of Israeli military occupation, West Bank society is fragmented by conflicts at all levels—within family, clan and religious groups, institutions and political factions, he says.

Zoughbi says the center is particularly needed now, when the West Bank exists in a twilight zone between Israeli military occupation and the anticipated beginning of Palestinian autonomy. According to the Oslo 2 interim agreement initialed last September, Palestinian autonomy will gradually expand into the West Bank during the coming months, symbolized by elections and the redeployment of the Israeli army. Until a functional Palestinian police and court system is in place, safety in the West Bank will continue to be contingent upon such factors as personal wealth, clan strength or membership in a political faction. Consequently, a Palestinian whose home or business is robbed, whose car is stolen or who is threatened with violence often has no place to turn for help.

continued on page 16

The third Anabaptist Women Doing Theology conference will be held May 9-11 in Winnipeg. Titled "Wind and Fire: Moving the Life Among Us," the conference is sponsored by Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Mennonite Central Committee Canada. To register, or for more information, contact Women Doing Theology, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

• • •

Eastern Mennonite University invites researchers to apply for the $2,000 Harry A. Brunk Scholars Award. The scholarship goes to a scholar who plans to complete research drawing on the resources of the Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives at EMU. The application deadline is Feb. 15. Contact the library at (540) 432-4170, e-mail lehmanjo@emu.edu.

• • •

A Mennonite Central Committee project is selling earthquake kits in British Columbia. MCC Supportive Care Services (SCS) in British Columbia is selling the kits to people who want to be prepared in the event of such a disaster. The agency, which provides services and programs for people dealing with mental, physical and emotional disabilities, started the project to help individuals learn job skills. The individual making the kits receives an honorarium for the work. Currently an individual who is unable to work full-time, due to mental illness, is coordinating the project. A two-person kit sells for $49.99 (Cdn.) and a four-person kit costs $59.99 (Cdn.) (plus taxes). The kits contain candles, a flashlight and batteries, matches, blankets, water purification tablets, a first-aid kit and other things. To order a kit, call 1-800-622-5455.

Russian Orthodox and Muslim leaders in the former Soviet Union have joined forces to fight the influence of Evangelicals in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. *Christianity Today* calls the interfaith agreement unprecedented. At an October 1995 meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan's capital, Muslim and Russian Orthodox leaders vowed to cooperate to slow and stop the influence of Evangelical Christians, Baptists, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses.

• • •

St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church celebrated its 50th anniversary Oct. 20-22, 1995.

• • •

Pope John Paul II's recent visit to the United States cost about $5.5 million, but that is nothing compared to his 1984 Canadian visit, reports *Prairie Messenger*. The 12-day trip in 1984 cost $13.5 million (Cdn.), even after recouping $8.5 million in revenues. The visit cost taxpayers $21 million (Cdn.)—$3 million from National Defence, $9 million from the Canadian Broadcasting Company, $3 million from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and $6 million from External Affairs, reports the *Globe and Mail*. By contrast, a 10-day visit by Queen Elizabeth normally costs Canadian taxpayers $1 million. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

The world's first kosher McDonald's opened just outside of Jerusalem last October. Unlike the other 18 non-kosher outlets in the country, the kosher McDonald's does not sell cheeseburgers, milk shakes or sundaes. Orthodox Jewish laws forbid the mixing of meat and dairy products. McDonald's Israeli licensee, Omri Padan, plans to open other kosher branches in Rehovot and Ra'anana. (*The Christian Leader*)

MCC West Bank with Catholic Relief Services and World Vision International developed a proposal to fund the center. Canadian International Development Agency and MCC Canada provided the funds.

"In the current situation, the presence of a center for conflict resolution creates hope," says Zoughbi. "It is a rising star within the community. We are cooperating with local grassroots leaders, with doctors, psychiatrists and lawyers. Through the center's work we hope to encourage the presence of justice in conflict situations as we work to build quality relationships." *Chip Poston and John Longhurst*

Giving Project hopes to build theology of money

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MC/CMC)—"Money is an all-consuming thing in our society—more so than sex or even work," says Mark Vincent, Elkhart, Ind., director of a five-year stewardship education project undertaken by the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC).

To ensure that money ends up being a servant to our Christian faith rather than in direct competition with it, Vincent believes the church needs to develop a core set of values about the use of money.

"We all need to be working off the same theological page," he says. "In the past, we have often taken a blitz approach to stewardship. We need a more foundational change, where our attitudes about money are built into our understanding about the church in the same way that we understand the importance of Communion, for instance."

The Giving Project: Growing Faithful Stewards in the Church will address this central issue, says Vincent, who has been the full-time director since last September.

In fact, he accepted the job on the condition that its purpose would not be to raise more money for the two denominations.

"I didn't want to be asked to measure the success of the project by whether it benefited a mission board or publishing house," he said. "Faithful Christianity isn't about keeping institutions afloat. It is about building God's kingdom."

According to Vincent, The Giving Project is about generosity, pure and simple. "Are Mennonites giving more or less away? Where the money goes is not what we're after," he says.

The
Giving Project
Growing faithful stewards in the church

He noted that the project may push the church to recognize different giving patterns. For example, instead of giving through the deacon's fund at church, people may be giving their money directly to someone who is in need because they have a relationship with that person.

To help him in his research about Mennonite attitudes about money, Vincent has asked all GC and MC churches in the United States and Canada to set aside a specific time to respond to the following scenario: "If a new believer approached you and said, 'I have a sense I need to honor God with my money in some way. What should I do?', what would you say?" He also plans to meet more extensively with 12 churches in the next 18 months.

After he has received enough feedback from the churches, Vincent plans to develop resources to help them teach a consistent theology of money.

In addition he hopes to find ways to partner with every Mennonite high school, college and seminary in order to encourage them to include stewardship education in their curriculum.

He also wants to form a network for accountability, which would provide training and credentials, for development officers in Mennonite institutions.

The Giving Project won't be without its challenges, says Vincent. As Mennonite institutions continue to grow, it costs additional funds to keep them operating. In today's climate, it is more common for institutions to plan projects without having secured the funding in advance. Many church members feel overwhelmed by the number of fund-raisers who ask them to donate their money.

Several of the development officers who work at Mennonite institutions aren't happy, either. "They are fed up with the lack of standards," he says. "They say there is a great need to improve the level of competency about fund-raising in the church.

"We need to regain the concept of ministry. The whole idea should not be about saving the institution but helping people be generous—that failure occurs when you turn someone off to giving."

Vincent thinks The Giving Project will encourage Mennonites to look beyond the tithe. "The tithe has certainly been a historic way for people to give to the church," he says. "I think it's a wonderful beginning point, but it certainly is not the ending point.

"Faithful Christianity isn't about keeping institutions afloat. It is about building God's kingdom."

Vincent

"We shouldn't feel like we've given our 10 percent and therefore we've bought God off. The spirit of the tithe should be a joyful response, not an obligation. We want to see the spirit of generosity in everything."

Vincent witnessed the generosity of his parents on a regular basis as a child growing up in Fort Wayne, Ind. He recalls how when he received his weekly allowance, there never was any question that a portion of it would be given to the local Evangelical Mennonite church.

But his parents' giving spirit went beyond dropping money into the offering plate. Their home was always open for people to come by and visit. An uncle who was experiencing marital problems even came to live with them for awhile.

During Vincent's teenage years, his father took a 50 percent pay cut to work as a development officer at a Bible college.

"According to a popular saying, money is you in a portable form," he says. "My hope is that through The Giving Project we will help cultivate stewards for the long term."

The Giving Project is sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, GC Division of General Services, MC Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and Mennonite Mutual Aid in cooperation with the Institute of Mennonite Studies.

For more information contact Mark Vincent, The Giving Project, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, phone and fax: (219) 296-6236 or e-mail: khnt99a@prodigy.com. *Carla Reimer*

Future uncertain for Institute of Mennonite Studies

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—This next year for the Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS) will be an important time to stop and reflect on the future and function of the agency, according to director Ross T. Bender.

In response to Bender's impending retirement in June as well as anticipated budget cuts, a task force has been appointed to consider the future vision of IMS and perhaps refocus its structure.

"I think this is always healthy in the life of an agency," Bender said.

During his concluding year as director, Bender anticipates seeing several items come to a conclusion: a weekend conference on mutual aid in January (co-sponsored with Mennonite Mutual Aid), the compilation of Marlin E. Miller's papers, and the publication of *The Confession of Peter Riedemann*, edited by John Friesen. Bender is particularly looking forward to the Congregational Studies Seminar in June, which he has been organizing since 1994.

"This is number one on my list of 33 items to do this year," he says. "I consider it the capstone of my time here."

The Congregational Studies Seminar will be an experiential event in which the participants learn the methods of ethnography to study a particular congregation. These methods include observing the congregation at worship, drawing a time line of the significant events in the history of the congregation, observing how the people relate to each other and to visitors, and discovering the current agenda of the congregation.

Currently Bender expects approximately 26 participants including

Forty-five percent of black Americans attend church weekly, compared with 31 percent of white Americans, reports *The Marketplace*. Forty-two percent of white Americans have used drugs, compared with 35 percent of black Americans. Twenty-four percent of white Americans suffer from alcohol problems, compared with 21 percent of black Americans. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

● ● ●

The United States is planning six underground tests involving nuclear materials in 1996 and 1997 at Nevada Test Site. The Department of Energy says the tests are necessary to keep aging nuclear weapons safe and to keep the test site capable of resuming full underground tests at any time. (*The Peace Farm Advocate*)

● ● ●

In most countries of the world, women work more than men, say studies published by the World Resources Institute. In low-income countries women work an average of nine hours more per week than men, taking into account paid and unpaid labor. In Eastern Europe and Africa they work the longest, an average of 70 and 67 hours per week, respectively. In Latin America they work an average of 60 hours per week. (*The Marketplace*)

● ● ●

Theology student Scott Hamby, 23, reached an out-of-court settlement with Wal-Mart, whom he sued in November 1993 for $5 million because of religious discrimination. Hamby had worked in the electronics department of a Wal-Mart store in Bolivar, Mo., and was forced to work on Sundays, against his religious principles. The settlement, in addition to awarding Hamby an undisclosed amount, calls for Wal-Mart to educate its 2,000 store managers and regional trainers about religious discrimination. (*Liberty*)

The United States Catholic Conference has established a movie review hotline. Callers can dial 1-800-311-4CCC to receive reviews of current movies, plus a video-of-the-week recommendation. The movie line was inspired by Pope John Paul II's World Communications Day statement, encouraging people to use movies as "an opportunity for growth" rather than "an occasion for harm." (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Billy Graham's son Franklin will succeed his father as chair and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. The BGEA board announced the decision last November. It also announced that Billy Graham, 77, will continue in those roles for the time being. The younger Graham will serve in a "newly created position with direct succession to become chair and CEO should his father ever become incapacitated," says a board release. (*Christian Week*)

• • •

A group of Canadian Christians is considering forming a coalition similar to the Christian Coalition in the United States. Impetus comes from the Ontario Political Action Committee and the Canadian Communication Coalition, both based in Toronto. Individuals among some 40 participants at a recent Toronto meeting asked not to be identified because they or the groups they represent are still unsure whether such a group should be formed or whether they would join. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

AMBS faculty, three faculty from Eastern Mennonite Seminary and several conference ministers. Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., and Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, will be the participating congregations for study. IMS received a large grant from the Schowalter Foundation, Newton, Kan., to fund this event.

Regarding the future of IMS, Bender dreams of its expansion in the likeness of the Young Center in Elizabethtown, Pa. Such an expansion would also include endowed funds to undergird fellowships for research. *June Mears*

AMBS plans to host mission institute

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary has announced plans for a first-ever Evangelism and Mission Institute to be held in July.

"This new initiative emphasizes our commitment to mission and evangelism through the Mission Training Center," says Willard Swartley, dean. It also provides a cooperative relationship between the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), who are sponsors of the Mission Training Center. The institute will be held July 8-Aug. 2 on the AMBS campus.

A weekend conference, Mission and Partnership, will be held July 19-21. The conference will focus on the themes of partnership, servanthood, inter-church relationships and indigenous contexts. It is open to all involved in mission—new appointees, agency personnel, missionaries on home leave and AMBS students. Conference presenters will include Peter Rempel of COM, Ron Yoder from MBM, John Lapp, executive director of MCC and former MCC administrator Nancy Heisey.

According to Swartley, the Evangelism and Mission Institute is planned for every July to "dovetail with the retreats of COM and MBM. It allows many people to come who wouldn't be able to otherwise." For information contact AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, Indiana, 46517-1999, or call (219) 295-3726 or 1-800-964-2627. *June Mears*

MCC sends aid to Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee is shipping aid to Afghanistan just in time for winter. Through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, MCC is supplying food valued at more than $1.2 million U.S./$1.6 million Cdn.

Since April 1992, competing factions in the country's civil war have turned Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, into a battleground. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been killed, wounded or displaced.

MCC has joined Tear Fund and CARE International to launch a "winter relief program" that began in Kabul in December. Some MCC aid is assisting widows and their children, among Kabul's most vulnerable residents.

In late November Ron Bietz, MCC's food aid manager, spent several days in Kabul meeting with staff from the agencies that will distribute the food. During one meeting, he heard bombing and later discovered a residential section of the city had been hit; 39 people, including 12 children, were reported killed.

"The situation is clearly unstable. There are risks involved in trying to move food into Kabul," says Bietz. "But the need is there so we believe we must try."

Sheryl Martin (MCC)

Most vulnerable: *A mother brings her child to be vaccinated in Kabul, Afghanistan.*

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

MINISTERS

Katie Booy was commissioned Oct. 29, 1995, as youth program coordinator for Grace Church, Winkler, Man.

Matt Friesen was ordained Dec. 17, 1995, as pastor at Hope Church, Wichita, Kan.

Imbenzi George has ended his work as director of youth ministries for the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia.

Roy Kaufman was installed as pastor at Tiefengrund Church, Laird, Sask., Sept. 3, 1995.

Alfred Klassen will begin as assistant pastor at Grace Church, Winkler, Man., Feb. 1.

Clara and **Earl Meyers**, First Church, Kitchener, Ont., served as interim pastors at Petitcodiac (N.B.) Church.

Wally Nickel will end as associate pastor at Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, May 1.

Anna-Lisa Salo was ordained as pastor at Waters Church, Lively, Ont., Nov. 12, 1995.

Ken Tse was installed as pastor at Edmonton (Alta.) Chinese Church, Nov. 5, 1995.

WORKERS

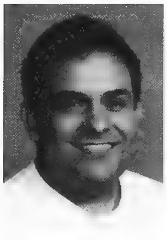
Bruno Baerg, Waterloo (Ont.) North Church, will become executive director of MCC Saskatchewan beginning in May.

Abe Janzen will be executive director of MCC Alberta beginning in June.

Geralde Reesor-Grooters, Hagerman Church, Markham, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in Stouffville, Ont., as an educator, promoter and International Visitor Exchange Program coordinator at Care and Share Shoppe in Stouffville.

Reesor-Grooters

Florence Roes, Riverdale Church, Millbank, Ont., has begun a two-year Commission on Overseas Mission/Mennonite Board of Missions term as hostess of the Japan Anabaptist Center in Tokyo.



Torres

Crescencio Torres, San Antonio (Texas) Church, began a one-year MCC service internship in San Antonio as an assistant director of La Casa de María y Marta (Mary Martha House).

Development Director—Indian Creek Foundation, a human service agency, is seeking an experienced individual who has high energy and is goal/action oriented. Must have a five-year proven track record in annual programs, deferred giving plans, innovative community partnerships and a commitment to a nonprofit organization.

Please send resume and salary requirements to **HR Department, Indian Creek Foundation, P.O. Box 225, Harleysville, PA 19438.**

Assistant editor position

The General Conference Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of **assistant editor** of *The Mennonite*.

Applicants should have writing, editing, organizational and some administrative skills and a willingness to support the conference goals. Skills in desktop publishing and design are desirable.

Submit a resume **by Feb. 15** to **Editor, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org**. Deadline may be extended.

For more information contact Gordon Houser or Dave Linscheid at the above address or at (316) 283-5100.

Ten percent of Liberia's 60,000 soldiers fighting in its civil war were under the age of 15. Children by the thousands are also fighting in Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone. Thousands more fought in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Angola, Mozambique and Rwanda. (Mennonite World Conference)

• • •

"The wars of the next century will be over water"—not oil or politics—says Ismail Serageldin, environment vice president of the World Bank. He says 80 countries now have shortages that threaten health and economies; 40 percent of the world's people (more than 2 billion) have no access to clean water or sanitation. As industrial, agricultural and individual demands everywhere escalate, the situation is deteriorating. Worldwide demand for water is doubling every 21 years. (*World Press Review*)

• • •

The Index of Social Health, which gauges U.S. performance in addressing key social problems, shows U.S. social health has dropped to its fourth-lowest level since 1970, the first year of the index. The following reached their worst recorded levels: children in poverty, child abuse, health insurance coverage, average weekly earnings, out-of-pocket health costs for people over 65 and the gap between rich and poor. Areas improving included poverty levels among those over 65, infant mortality, teen suicide, unemployment, food-stamp coverage and access to affordable housing. The study compared trends in economic growth and social health and found a growing divergence between the two. "Now, when the economy improves, it leaves social problems virtually unaffected," wrote Marc Miringoff. Miringoff directs the Institute for Innovation in Social Policy at Fordham University, Tarrytown, N.Y., which issues the index. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

EXPLORE THE INTERNET

Who: Mennonites and Brethren

What: Council on Church and Media (CCM) annual convention

Theme: "Exploring the Internet"

When: Thursday evening, May 30, to Saturday afternoon, June 1, 1996

Where: Toronto Colony Hotel in the heart of Toronto

Details: For more information contact Dave Linscheid, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, phone (316) 283-5100, fax (316) 283-0454, e-mail davel@gcmc.org

PRESIDENT
Canadian Mennonite
Bible College

cmbc

The Presidential Selection Committee for Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites nominations and applications for the position of president.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College is the college of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and is an approved teaching center of the University of Manitoba. Primary programs of study are offered in Bible and theology and music. A variety of courses is also offered from the broader arts and humanities. A strong sense of community, as rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, is central to the college program. The president is responsible for the general administration of all aspects of the college. Preference will be given to candidates who stand within the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, who have an earned doctorate in a teaching area of the college and some graduate-level training in theology.

All inquiries will be held in strict confidence. **The appointment begins July 1, 1997.** Application with a resume and letters of nomination should be received by **Feb. 29, 1996**. Send to:

David Brubacher
Presidential Selection Committee Chair
Box 305
Vineland, ON L0R 2C0

Ben-El Child Development Center is seeking to fill the position of **director**. This progressive community mental health agency, located in west central Ohio, needs an energetic, professional leader to guide it through an exciting era of impending expansion. Candidates must have a master's degree in administration, social work, or a related field. Candidates will find management experience to be an asset.

Contact or send resume to **James Burkett, Adriel School, Box 188, West Liberty, OH 43357; (513) 465-0010**. EOE

Goshen College announces a three-year position in **applied mathematics and computer science** beginning fall 1996. A long-term appointment is possible depending on program growth. Responsibilities include teaching introductory and advanced computer and mathematics courses. Master's degree and graduate study in applied mathematics and computer science is required; Ph.D. in mathematics, computer science or related area is preferred.

Goshen College seeks a **professor of communication** beginning July 1 to direct the speech program and teach in related areas. Qualifications include an advanced degree (preferably a doctorate with graduate-level courses in speech communication) and teaching experience at the college level.

Goshen College announces a full-time, tenure-track position in **information systems** beginning in the fall. Responsibilities include teaching introductory and advanced courses in information systems or business and courses in the Management Development Program. Master's degree is expected, with preference given to candidates with doctorate and/or work experience in the field of information systems. Effectiveness as a teacher is essential.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send curriculum vitae and three letters of reference to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660;**
e-mail Johndn@goshen.edu
<http://www.goshen.edu>

Food services director at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Position includes noon cafeteria and evening banquets.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Ken Herr, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

HVAC-Plumbing Supervisor (12-month, full-time position). Responsible to operate and maintain the heating, air conditioning and ventilating systems; promote energy conservation, supervise the installation, maintenance and repair of plumbing systems; oversee refrigeration units. Must have a high school diploma; two years of technical training or trade school, 10 years of HVAC experience and commercial experience preferred. Must be computer literate.

Application deadline: **Jan. 31**. Multiethnic people and women are especially encouraged to apply. If interested, please contact **Eastern Mennonite University Human Resources Office, (540) 432-4108; e-mail: EbyBJ@EMU.Edu**

Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, a Christian urban day school K-8, seeks **head administrator** with commitment to the vision of providing quality Christian education with an Anabaptist emphasis in the ethnic and economic diversity of the city. Responsibilities include general administration, business management, educational supervision, supervision of overall maintenance, and assistance in fund development. Administrator supervises staff of 12 to 16, coordinates volunteer services and reports to board of directors. Qualifications: professional teaching experience and administrative experience. Master's degree in education or related field and active membership in Mennonite or other Anabaptist church desirable.

Send letter of application and current resume **by Feb. 1, 1996**, to **Fred Doering, Search Committee Co-Chair, c/o Grace Community Church, 4155 S. Rockwell St., Chicago, IL 60632.** For further information, **call Richard Weaver, Board President, (419) 358-6826.**

Are your retirement investments rooted in your values?

Roots are unseen, but they find their expression in the light of day.

Same with living your beliefs, such as investing your hard-earned retirement money according to your values.

That's the reason for MMA Praxis Mutual Funds. With MMA Praxis, you can get an IRA that invests in enterprises that enhance peace, justice, and the quality of human life. An IRA that can really express your values.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

M M A

Summer School at AMBS

June 3-14

Anabaptist Spirituality
C.J. Dyck, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, AMBS

Religious and Psychological Assessment
Ruth Lesher, Ph.D.,
clinical psychologist, Lancaster, Pa.

Isaiah
Ben Ollenburger, Ph.D.,
Professor of Biblical Theology, AMBS

June 17-28

Revelation of John
J. Nelson Kraybill, Ph.D., Director of London Mennonite Centre

Conflict, Communication, Conciliation
(June 20-28)
John Paul Lederach, Ph.D.; Eastern Mennonite University; Director of the International Conciliation Service, Mennonite Central Committee

Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, M.Div.; AMBS
Mary Oyer, D.Mus.A.; AMBS
June Alliman Yoder, D.Min.; AMBS

Christian Life in a Post-Modern World
Harry Huebner, Ph.D.,Canadian Mennonite Bible College

Creation and Spiritual Renewal
Perry Yoder, Ph.D., AMBS
Includes canoe trip in boundary waters, June 21-29.

August 5-30

Reading Hebrew Narrative: Ruth
(Beginning Hebrew Language)
Perry Yoder, Ph.D., AMBS

July will feature the first AMBS summer Mission and Evangelism Institute.

For more information, call AMBS,
1 + 800 964-2627

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, Indiana 46517-1999
219 295-3726
1 + 800 964-AMBS (2627)

Reviews

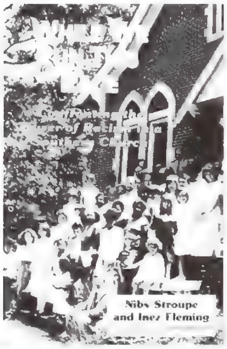
BOOKS

HARD WORDS FOR WHITES

While We Run this Race: Confronting the Power of Racism in a Southern Church *by Nibs Stroupe and Inez Fleming (Orbis Books, 1995, 174 pages)*

Reviewed by Jody Miller Shearer, Akron, Pa.

I first heard about Nibs Stroupe and Oakhurst Presbyterian Church in Decatur, Ga., several years ago. A mutual friend had shared a copy of a sermon by Stroupe that spoke out clearly against racism. I remember thinking, "It'll only take a few more sermons like that before they shut that white man down. Most churches don't take kindly to race traitors."



The publication of *While We Run this Race* shows how wrong I was. Along with Inez Fleming, a black church elder, Stroupe has written a book of uncommon insight that continues to speak clearly against racism. Together they have crafted a work that springs from the "despair and hope" of life in a multicultural congregation.

The book lives up to its subtitle, "Confronting the Power of Racism in a Southern Church." Through fresh scriptural reflection, piercing analysis, personal storytelling and practical descriptions of life at Oakhurst, racism is unflinchingly confronted. I was particularly impressed with the honesty of the stories and self-critique. In Fleming's powerful but all-too-short essay she notes, "We at Oakhurst want to move quickly over race without really encountering it, 'we' meaning both black and white."

But make no mistake, neither Stroupe nor Fleming backs away from identifying the responsibility white people have for dismantling racism. Stroupe notes, "The demonic power of race is primal, but it cannot exist unless white people say yes to it." His comments on the interplay of systemic force and individual choice in this section on racism as demon possession were some of the most helpful I have read.

The last chapter identifies three beliefs undergirding their diversity agenda: "God's definition of us is primary, diversity is a gift, and race has continuing power." Mennonite congregations will do well to follow their lead.

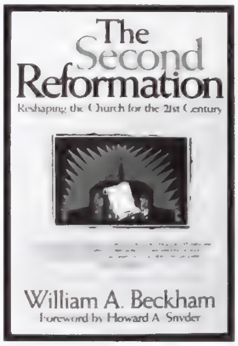
CELL CHURCH GROUNDWORK

The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century *by William A. Beckham (Touch Publications, 1995, 253 pages)*

Reviewed by Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif.

"Those who want to be Christians in earnest and who profess the gospel with hand and mouth should sign their names and meet alone in a home somewhere to pray, to read, baptize, to receive the sacrament and to do other Christian works" (Martin Luther).

Beginning with this quote from Martin Luther, Beckham points out that Luther's vision included a church that meets in homes. But Luther's reforms did not move beyond theology and doctrine. (Beckham does mention Anabaptists and others since the 16th century that have worked at shaping the church according to New Testament patterns.)


The Second Reformation
Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century
William A. Beckham
Foreword by Howard A. Snyder

Because the work of the Reformation was not completed, the "Second Reformation" is under way. Around the world cell churches are developing. These cell churches Beckham describes as "two-winged churches." They have a small-group wing where people pray, study the Bible and share together, and a large-group wing for worship and celebration. The church must have both if it is to fly.

The Second Reformation is a valuable addition to the current discussion of cell churches. It provides both a theological and practical foundation for developing a cell-based church. Beckham writes in a style that is more accessible than some previous materials on the cell church. His language is inclusive, his tone is encouraging and his theological language invites application to other traditions

– 1996 IS –

THE YEAR FOR EUROPE

with...
JOHN L. RUTH
as Storyteller

June 10 - 26
Menno Simons' 500th Anniversary Tour

September 26 - October 10
Fall Harvest Tour

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for information on EUROPEAN TOURS or our other tours to Jamaica, Australia - New Zealand, Vienna, Alaska or India (MWC).

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8 1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960
Reg.# 1567624

(his background is Southern Baptist).

Especially valuable is the discussion of how to develop a cell church—either as a new church or from an existing church. Beckham's suggestions do not overwhelm you as some cell church materials tend to, but rather guide you in the careful development of a prototype. His suggestions and cautions show that he has "been there, done that" and knows that the development of a cell church takes much prayer, perseverance and hard work. Anyone interested in learning more about cell churches or thinking about developing a cell-based church should read *The Second Reformation*.

HISTORY OF NONVIOLENCE

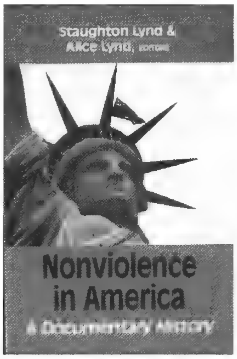
Nonviolence in America: A Documentary History, *revised edition edited by Staughton Lynd and Alice Lynd (Orbis Books, 1995, 530 pages)*

Reviewed by Valerie Schrag, Lancaster, Pa.

Nonviolence in America is a collection of documents highlighting the tradition of nonviolence in the United States. It is a journey into one of the lesser-known American traditions. The book encompasses documents from William Penn's 1681 letter to the Delaware tribe of Pennsylvania to Gulf War resisters. It is a revised and expanded edition of the original book first published in 1966.

Nonviolence in America is an excellent source for documents written after the turn of the 20th century. The Lynds give extra attention to the post-World War II era; half the book contains documents from the past 50 years. The book follows the efforts of civil rights workers, Vietnam War opponents, trade unionists, the Central American refugee sanctuary movement and the Catholic Worker movement, in addition to others. All of the documents highlight the use of nonviolent tactics in campaigning for change.

The first section of the book, covering American history before the 1960s, remains largely unchanged from the 1966 edition. The most glaring weakness is that the American nonviolent tradition before the 1870s is barely highlighted; the Lynds devote only two of the 15 sections to this time period. In their revisions, the Lynds did not document more fully the nonviolence tradition throughout American history; they documented nonviolent American history from the mid-1960s to 1995.



Nonviolence in America is a good introductory reader to the American tradition of nonviolence. The Lynds provide a valuable resource for the student of nonviolence, opening doors to more in-depth research into the nonviolence tradition. The book is written primarily from a secular perspective; one must go to other sources to find the Christian perspective on nonviolence. This book is an important resource toward documenting nonviolence in the American context.

Resources

- **A special issue of The Conrad Grebel Review** focuses on relief and development work, featuring papers from a conference held in June 1995 marking MCC's 75th anniversary. Order from Conrad Grebel College, (519) 885-0220; fax (519) 885-0014; single copies $10 U.S./$12 Cdn. plus shipping.
- **Migration North: Mennonites from Mexico** is a 45-minute video that helps Canadians in understanding Mennonites coming to Canada from Mexico. Available for $20 Cdn. from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; or from your provincial MCC office.
- **Gift of Wings: An Aerial Celebration of Canada** by Carl E. Hiebert includes 142 stunning photographs of Canada taken from Hiebert's ultralight aircraft. Order from Carl E. Hiebert, 556 Fallingbrook Drive, Waterloo, ON N2L 4N4; (519) 884-1194; $57 Cdn. postpaid.
- **Discover Your Spiritual Type: A Guide to Individual and Congregational Growth** by Corinne Ware (Alban Institute, 1995, $18.85 U.S. postpaid) provides a framework to assess spiritual experience, similar to the Myers-Briggs format for assessing personality type.
- **Peace Ministry: A Handbook for Local Churches** by Daniel L. Buttry (Judson Press, 1995, $14) has stories of peacemaking in local churches, positive approaches to problem-solving and more.
- **The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version** (Oxford University Press, 1995, $14.95) uses language that is expressive of gender, racial and religious inclusiveness, and sensitive to language about disabled people.
- **It Had to Be a Monday** by Jill Briscoe (Tyndale House, 1995, $10.99 U.S.) contains reflections on the life of Job. Each of the 15 chapters includes analysis and discussion questions.

RACISM RESOURCES

- **Free Indeed** is a 25-minute video drama challenging white viewers to think about the privileges that come with being white in North America. Available on loan from any MCC office.
- **Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice** by Paul Kivel (New Society Publishers, 1995, $16.95 U.S.) gives white people practical steps to change structures of racial injustice.
- **Christianity on Trial: African-American Religious Thought Before and After Black Power** by Mark L. Chapman (Orbis, 1995, $19 U.S.) reviews the ways African-Americans have addressed the problem of whether Christianity is a source of liberation or oppression.
- **Anti-Immigrant Backlash—Spanish edition** is a four-page study action guide, now translated into Spanish, on the rise of anti-immigrant bias in the United States, immigrant contributions, and what churches can do. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; $.30 each or 4/$1.

***********CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 491
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

The color of our sin

One of the most radical, revolutionary statements in the Bible is made by Peter when he says, "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35). This came after Peter had a vision of unclean animals and a voice told him to "kill and eat" (v. 13).

For Peter, a Jew, the world was divided in two: his people on one side, and all the rest, Gentiles, on the other. Such separation was deeply ingrained in Peter, and the Bible is full of references to this division.

The apostle Paul, who wrote much of the New Testament, calls the division a "dividing wall" (Ephesians 2:14). His main mission was to announce that Christ by his death had broken down this wall and brought the two groups together. This mission was no easy task. Paul got into all kinds of trouble for trying to bring two groups together: he was beaten many times, thrown into prison and threatened with death.

> *What does it take for us to see and live the truth that God shows no partiality?*

Jesus faced troubles as well for bringing up and acting on the "Gentile thing." His fellow townspeople at Nazareth ran him out of town and tried to stone him (see Luke 4:16-29). What got them riled was not so much that he claimed to be the prophet announced in the book of Isaiah but his statements about Elijah going to "a widow at Zarephath in Sidon" (v. 26) and Elisha cleansing Naaman the Syrian when "there were also many lepers in Israel" (v. 27). While their own people were also suffering, Elijah and Elisha each helped out Gentiles. This turned the quiet crowd in the synagogue into a lynch mob.

Jesus also traveled to Gentile areas and healed people (e.g., Mark 5:1-20). His ministry included breaking through all kinds of barriers set up to exclude certain people from participating in the community of God's people. These ranged from clean and unclean foods to diseases, economic standing, gender, age and whether or not one was a Jew.

Such barriers, marks of inclusion or exclusion, exist in all societies. One of their characteristics is that they are often invisible to those within those societies. That's one reason it took extreme measures—Peter's vision of clean and unclean animals (Acts 10:9-23) and Paul's being struck blind on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19)—to get through to Peter and Paul the gospel message of Christ breaking down such barriers.

The color of our skin: What about us? Can we see the barriers that exist in our society, in our communities, in our churches? I imagine we could list many, yet one that stands out is the barrier of race. In spite of all we may have done, we continue to conform to the world by dividing ourselves according to the color of our skin.

We can read about racism and try to be politically correct by changing the way we talk about race. I don't discount this at all. But it will take more than talk to live out the gospel in this area. If Peter and Paul—metaphorically speaking—had to be hit over the head, what will it take for us to see and live the truth that God shows no partiality?

It may take getting to know and trust one another across racial lines. It may take more white converts to black churches like Craig Keener (see page 6). It will take recognizing our sins of partiality, the prejudices we don't want to admit we have. Test your response to the photo on page 9. Many of us know white parents who have adopted black children. Do we know black parents who have adopted white children?

In the coming months I will be part of a group of people working in the General Conference Mennonite Church who will receive training in how to counter institutional racism. I imagine I will be confronted with my own sins of partiality. I plan to report some of this learning in future issues.

Let us pray for one another as we ask the Lord to open our eyes to the ways we participate in excluding people because of race. Let us rise with Peter and—metaphorically speaking—eat. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 02
JANUARY 23. 1996

JAN 30 '96

Inside

We can learn from Mennonites around the world / p. 8

A strange vocation / p. 11

More than 30 years of service in Calcutta / p. 12

A time to hear the Spirit (page 3)

In search of Calcutta (page 5)

Happy birthday, Menno! (page 7)

Larry Miller (left), Mennonite World Conference executive secretary, and Shant Kunjam of India are organizers for the MWC Assembly in Calcutta in January 1997.

COME TO India IN 1997

Prologue

It is time to begin planning, if you haven't already, for going to India in January 1997. If you cannot go, perhaps you'd like to help someone else go, either a person from your congregation or someone from another, poorer country.

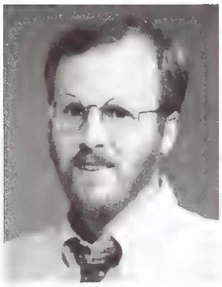
Let the articles in this issue serve as information and inspiration as you consider whether or not you should go to India or help someone else go.

Marcus Shantz (page 3) tells us what to expect at the Mennonite World Conference Assembly. There will be time for tea, work, worship and flexibility. The goal of the gathering is to hear what the Spirit is saying to Anabaptist churches from around the world.

Louise Nussbaumer (page 5) discusses this goal in light of the setting of the gathering, Calcutta.

January 28 has been designated World Fellowship Day (see page 7), and this year we commemorate 500 years since the birth of Menno Simons. We will carry more articles on Menno later this year.

Phyllis Pellman Good writes about our need to learn from other Mennonite fellowships around the world (page 8).



Learn about the church's strange vocation in Byron Rempel-Burkholder's Bible study (page 11).

And read about Margaret Devadason's faithful service in Calcutta (page 12). *gh*

Next issue: Reflections on Lent

Cover: Photo by Eleanor Miller

Contents

FEATURES

3 A time to hear the Spirit

Plans are proceeding for the Menonite World Conference Assembly in Calcutta next January.

5 In search of Calcutta

What you can expect from India 1997 in Calcutta

6 How to travel in another culture

7 Happy birthday, Menno!

Celebrate Menno Simons' 500th birthday on World Fellowship Day, January 28.

DEPARTMENTS

8 Speaking out
10 Letters
11 Bible
12 Profile
13 News
21 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Larry Penner

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail TheMennonite@gcmc.org

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Plans are proceeding for the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Calcutta next January.

A TIME TO HEAR THE Spirit

Marcus Shantz

With just a year to go before Mennonite World Conference gathers in India, program planning is already well under way, reports MWC executive secretary Larry Miller.

But while arranging speakers and organizing sessions are high priority items, Assembly planners worldwide are also working to create opportunities for face-to-face, one-on-one encounters.

"At Calcutta, the program itself will be full and varied," says Larry, "but we're also trying to develop an environment where people can meet each other informally, face-to-face. These personal encounters will be a great opportunity for participants to learn from each other and develop links—and maybe in the long run they are at least as important as the formal sessions we are planning. We hope we can be transformed and renewed in the process of meeting each other."

A time for tea: Forums for these face-to-face meetings will include morning and afternoon tea breaks in small groups, Bible study and the "Global Church Village"—an outdoor area featuring booths, displays and activities from Anabaptist-Mennonite churches around the world.

Afternoon sessions will include gatherings of youth, women, pastors and representatives of congregations. Participants will also be able to meet various Christians who live in Calcutta, and they may have the opportunity to visit some of their workplaces.

"Assembly Scattered" will provide additional opportunities for close encounters. Local churches throughout India will host small groups of interested participants. Depending on the preference of host churches, these groups will be hosted for several days before or after "Assembly Gathered" in Calcutta, Jan. 6-12, 1997.

A time for work: According to Larry, Assembly Gathered will also be a working assembly that will include sessions of the Mennonite World Conference General Council, Faith and Life Council and Peace Council. Each of the councils is made up of delegates appointed by member churches, but all sessions—including General Council meetings—will be open to interested observers.

Among other business, the General Council will decide how to distribute the Global Church Sharing Fund, a resource of $1 million U.S. Money for the fund, set up to assist national churches worldwide, was contributed by Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Mutual Aid, each headquartered in North America.

Larry looks forward to that discussion. "The decision of how to allocate the fund will be made by the General Council—an international body that represents all Mennonite World Conference member churches—rather than a North American or European committee. It's an experiment in international decision making. It will also be a test of our spirituality—in the New Testament,

> ***"It will be a setting in which individual participants can move outside their cultural boundaries and live together for one week as a global church."*** **Larry Miller**

few activities are more spiritual than deciding what to do with money."

A time for worship: In Calcutta, each day's program will focus on the life of the church on a particular continent. Services will reflect the Assembly's theme, "Hear What the Spirit Is Saying to the Churches."

"Daily worship together will be a chance to listen to the experience of churches worldwide," says Larry. "We will hear each other's stories and learn something about the unique issues that churches face in different regions. It will be a setting in which individual participants can move outside their cultural boundaries and live together for one week as a global church."

As Assembly hosts, the Indian churches will plan the opening and closing worship services. In between, daily worship and other sessions are being developed by planning groups on five continents. "One of the goals of the Assembly in Calcutta is to give the churches on each continent the opportunity and freedom to help set the agenda," Larry explains. "As such, we felt it was important for continental committees to share the responsibility for programming, rather than relying on one centralized planning group."

A time for flexibility: This decentralized approach to schedule and program may require an adjustment in expectations for North American and European visitors. Final program information may not be available until September or October—just a few months before the Assembly.

Larry says, "We in the West are used to having conference schedules in hand well in advance. We like to know what's going on ahead of time. As we prepare for India 1997, we will need to adjust ourselves mentally, culturally and chronologically. The timetable will be more flexible than we are accustomed to. And it may be that allowing ourselves this kind of freedom and spontaneity will enable us to hear the Spirit more clearly. ... We might not fully understand what happened at India 1997 until it's over and everyone has gone home."

Larry predicts that the city of Calcutta will have an impact on the Assembly. "Most people—especially people from wealthier countries—cannot come to Calcutta without being struck by the number of people who have little material security. The environment, sounds and smells will have an impact on visitors and on the proceedings of our meetings. It's inevitable."

Like many others, Larry believes this impact can be positive if visitors pay attention to the people of Calcutta. "I have found it helpful in my visits to focus on the people I meet and their faces. You realize that despite apparently difficult circumstances, many people radiate beauty, grace and friendliness. Many who live in Calcutta have sorted out what is essential in life and what is not. For me, these people, their faces and their lives are a source of hope and strength."

Marcus Shantz is a special projects volunteer with Mennonite World Conference in the Strasbourg, France, office.

India **1997:** Assembly Gathered

Jan. 6-12, 1997

Monday afternoon, Jan. 6
Registration, welcome session and festive meal

Daily focus (8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.)

Tuesday, Jan. 7	Europe
Wednesday, Jan. 8	North America
Thursday, Jan. 9	Asia
Friday, Jan. 10	Africa
Saturday, Jan. 11	Latin America

Working meetings
MWC Faith and Life Council
MWC Peace Council
MWC General Council
plus many other gatherings of women, youth, pastors and congregational representatives

Sunday morning, Jan. 12
Closing worship and farewell dinner

In search of Calcutta

What you can expect from India 1997 in Calcutta

Louise Nussbaumer

Much has been said about Calcutta and its City of Joy: the misery, the overpopulation, the smells, the pollution, but also the patient work, often hidden, of those who hope to diminish these epidemics.

On arrival, the city gives the impression of being more or less in decay. Buildings are badly maintained and dilapidated, streets and sidewalks battered and littered with rubbish, dogs and cats half-starved, and beggars whose stares never leave you. Yet in spite of this, Calcutta is a well-known city that dares to speak of hope, a city where Christian churches of all denominations help one another to serve the poorest of the poor.

It was in Calcutta in January 1995 that the executive committee of Mennonite World Conference met to prepare the next world assembly, India 1997.

The choice to have Calcutta as the location for the next world assembly was made after careful consideration. The presence of well-situated churches and of a 50-year-old Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) office will significantly facilitate organization. In January the weather is pleasant and the schools are on holidays, which frees up needed facilities.

The program is taking shape. An MWC office in Calcutta has begun modest operation with Margaret Davadason, who spent many years in service with MCC. An organizing committee has been established, and what seemed like a wild dream three years ago is now taking form. On the vast campus of St. Thomas School will be assembled tents, meeting and eating areas to supplement the buildings that already exist.

What can we expect from this gathering? Here is a beginning answer:

- A witness of love and solidarity in a world of poverty and suffering;
- A true gathering of Christians engaged in their local churches (may participants make the effort to listen to their sisters and brothers before telling their own stories);
- A step toward actualizing the biblical understanding of Anabaptists of the 16th century and modifying that to our own daily life;
- Assistance for young churches, who are often minorities in their own countries, to find their identity, to manage their independence and to assume responsibilities in a world of indifference and hostility;
- An opportunity to discover a new vision for our churches at the dawn of the 21st century.

> ***We must plan with care. We must encourage involvement of our churches to offer a little of ourselves to our brothers and sisters and to prepare us to receive from Calcutta another kind of vision.***

Even though the program is far from complete, the executive committee is working on certain agendas:

- To permit each world family an opportunity to speak, each continent will be responsible for one day by proposing a theme, arranging for speakers and structuring a program.
- To multiply points of contact, each continent will be invited to set up a tent to display exhibits and hold symposiums or other activities.
- Before or after Assembly Gathered in Calcutta, participants will have the opportunity to visit local Indian churches. This will be called "Assembly Scattered"—a time to meet and fellowship on the home territory of these churches.

In order for the life of our churches to be affected by those who will have learned in Calcutta, we must plan with care. We must participate actively and encourage involvement of our churches to offer a little of ourselves to our brothers and sisters and to prepare us to receive another kind of vision. It is in this hope for sharing that the executive committee chose the theme "Hear What the Spirit Is Saying to the Churches," taken from Revelation 3:22.

For things to continue to go well in the next year, we must pray for India, for the churches there, for all these projects. May Christ give us the grace and the means necessary.

Those coming to Calcutta can hope for an outstanding event not only through meeting people but through being with people of God who are gathered to listen to God and God's words.

Meaningful moments: When we visited in 1995, there were meaningful moments that allowed our executive committee to discover a Calcutta that was endearing and unforgettable. We felt we had almost returned to apostolic times. One Sunday morning in a small Bengali church in a neighborhood in the center of the city, we felt the small house transformed into a place of worship. We knew at that moment that we were with family.

We discovered at the same time the magnificent work of missionary organizations, such as the work of MCC with its projects and development in every sector: health, education, professional training, rural development and irrigation.

It was in the headquarters of the Missionaries of Charities that we met Mother Teresa, a woman of 87, bent over with age. It was touching to see her in her white sari with a dark blue border. She had an energetic eye and a pure spirit. She seemed full of projects and was always on the move. The conversation flowed easily. She talked about her 541 houses throughout the world. "We live," she said, "like the birds and the flowers."

But behind these words hides an impressive tenacity. "When I need food, I go to the Mennonites, and when I need something I don't stop until I've gotten it." In reference to the number of volunteers who work in her homes, she says, "All that I have to offer them is work, but work and prayer together change the lives of these young people."

Mother Teresa has created throughout the world an incredible movement in support of the penniless. She gives a voice to those to whom no one listens. The eyes of the orphans, the volunteers and the sisters reflect the beauty of service, a sign of the kingdom.

As we were leaving, Mother Teresa asked us to pray for her, for her sisters and for her homes. With a knowing smile she distributed to all of us her "business card," which carried this message:

The fruit of silence is prayer.
The fruit of prayer is faith.
The fruit of faith is love.
The fruit of love is service.
The fruit of service is peace.

Louise Nussbaumer is one of two representatives from Europe to MWC's executive committee. This article was translated from Christ Seul, *a French Mennonite monthly periodical, by Shanti DeFehr.*

How to travel in another culture

Understanding another culture: Your first goal goal for an intercultural experience should be your wish to understand something of another people, their society and their culture. Four more specific goals can help you accomplish this:

1. Become familiar with as much about a society and culture as you possibly can. Read in advance about where you will be. Map an itinerary and study chief regions, peoples and historical landmarks you will visit.
2. When traveling, try to make connections between your previous knowledge—no matter how fragmentary—and what you observe firsthand.
3. Use conversations with local people to learn to look at events from their perspective.
4. Learn to communicate accurately your new understanding.

Understanding your own culture: Intercultural experience will increase your awareness of your own culture and of world culture by broadening your perspective. With knowledge of different lifestyles, you can make comparisons between cultures.

As we encounter people from other culture we gain new perspectives on our culture. As you acquire friends from another culture you gain an increased tolerance of other lifestyles, the unfamiliar, the new culture.

Your brief stay in another society has the potential for influencing global harmony. You will have the potential for altering conceptions and stereotypes at home and abroad.

Travel techniques: Responsible travel respects natural, social and cultural environments. The responsible traveler chooses services that benefit both the traveler and host by arranging to do the following:

- **Use public transportation when possible.** Besides contributing to a cleaner environment, public transportation affords many opportunities to interact with local people and other travelers and often takes you off the standard tourist track.
- **Frequent locally owned enterprises.** Money into the pockets of local people allows them success as proprietors, political power and a say in how their community is run. It supports them in creating their community the way they want it and puts them into a position of power, rather than leaving them in the position of subservient employees.

Excerpted from The International Traveler, *published by The American Forum for Global Education.*

Happy birthday, Menno!

Celebrate Menno Simons' 500*th birthday on* World Fellowship Day, January 28.

For some time World Fellowship Day has been celebrated by many Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches throughout the world on different dates. Delegates to the Mennonite World Conference General Council in Zimbabwe in 1993 voted for one date for all the churches. That date is the fourth Sunday in January, remembering our common background in the first Anabaptist baptism, which took place on Jan. 25, 1525, in Zurich, Switzerland.

It is 500 years since Menno Simons was born at the end of January 1496 in the Netherlands. He gave structure to the Anabaptist movement. He showed a way to the future that proved to be passable. Worldwide nearly a million people now see Menno Simons as one of their spiritual forebears or even call themselves after him.

World Fellowship Day 1996 is the start of the "Menno Year." On Sunday, Jan. 28, we celebrate not only our worldwide fellowship but also our common roots.

Our worldwide fellowship rests in our common commitment. Each of us joined the Anabaptist movement on the basis of a personal decision, a radical one.

We also find worldwide fellowship in different structures and organizations: in Mennonite World Conference, in the cooperation between mission boards and relief organizations, in gathering to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., from many places in the world, and in many other contacts. Through such contacts we discover that many cultural and theological differences have sprung up between us in the different places we live.

For example, it is important to Dutch Mennonites (and many others) that women are in all respects equal with men, both inside and outside the church. But not everywhere do people think like that. It is important to be aware that in our Mennonite world people have different ideas about many things, and it is good to be curious about them. But on World Fellowship Day we want to celebrate what we have in common. As an introduction to a year of commemorating Menno Simons, be glad about him and review what he has to say to us for today and tomorrow.

About Menno Simons: The so-called Radical Reformation began on Sunday, Jan. 25, 1525, with the adult (second) baptism of at least three people: George Blaurock, Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz. This (ana)baptism was a reaction to the reformation plans of Zwingli, which were considered too little too late. Their ideas were spread across northern Europe, by Melchior Hoffman and others. Hoffman stressed the nearness of the new Jerusalem. The violent excesses of Munster in 1534 (where armed Anabaptists took over the city until they were starved out) find part of their causes in his preaching. At that time persecution of the Anabaptists was widespread, which led to their dispersal.

Menno brought together the scattered Anabaptists, and a peaceful Anabaptism sprung up under his leadership.

Menno Simons was born in Witmarsum, Friesland (in the north of the Netherlands), most likely in 1496. In 1524 he was ordained a priest and shortly afterward got an appointment in nearby Pingjum.

Probably Menno Simons first heard about the Anabaptists when he heard the story of Sikke Freerks, who was beheaded because he had let himself be baptized again. This surprised Menno: "It sounded very strange to me that no one talked about a second baptism." But it interested him. He studied Scripture and the works of the fathers of the church, of Luther and of other theologians. In the end Menno concluded "that infant baptism is not taught [in Scripture] and that the church in this, too, has strayed from the right path." After much study of the Scriptures and more pondering, Menno became an Anabaptist in 1536.

In the following years Menno Simons formed congregations free of fanatical elements. He went from congregation to congregation preaching nonviolence. Thus Menno brought together the scattered Anabaptists, and a peaceful Anabaptism sprung up under his leadership. For centuries the works of Menno Simons were formative for the thinking and faith of the Mennonites.

Menno Simons, then, can be seen as the one who assembled the Anabaptists in northern Europe and brought them back to peaceful ways. In that, he proved to be the greatest (though not the only) leader.

Speaking out

A time to draw together

We can learn from Mennonite fellowships around the world

Phyllis Pellman Good

Mennonite World Conference (MWC) has been, at least in my perhaps clouded and partial perception, a pet in the North American Mennonite world. Almost off the screen, it is brought to the center for a moment every six years or so, then left to drift to the periphery again, out of the range of the "critical" or the "essential" or even the "influential." It's a sort of picnic payoff for years of laboring in mission fields or for extending ourselves in massive relief work; an exotic get-together with the flavor of an extended family reunion or international party.

The organization was modest in its beginnings and intentions. After attending the first several assemblies, held to celebrate anniversaries significant in Mennonite history and to confer on some relief issues, Harold Bender wrote that Mennonite World Conference is "basically an inspirational and discussion conference, with no jurisdiction whatsoever over its constituent groups but responsive to their wishes." Then, with some hope and gentle direction, he concluded that it "can contribute much to the strengthening of worldwide Mennonitism and the effective discharge of its spiritual tasks."

In fact, I discovered on a short foray into Mennonite World Conference history a telling description of MWC activity. Bender, who wrote the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* entry for MWC, tells it almost wholly as a story of assemblies that met every five or six years. The most significant change was that they eventually took on theological themes, moving away from being primarily centered around historical anniversaries.

In Volume 5 of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Paul Kraybill wrote the article about MWC, extending the story as a series of assemblies that simply took on more features, more color, more staff, more bureaucracy. In one short paragraph he explains the development of International Mennonite Peace Council, and later adds a sentence about the beginnings of *Courier*, a quarterly newsletter. Those two efforts were the only additions to Mennonite World Conference program in about 50 years.

Only in 1978, 53 years after its first assembly, did MWC adopt a constitution, giving name to the activity it had been doing—but keeping the language wondrously broad—to provide for fellowship, communication and facilitation among Mennonites worldwide.

Little international effort: I review all this to show how little effort we North Americans have made to foster true sisterly-brotherly exchange with our sister churches around the world. We've let our missionaries on home-leave tell us about their work, and sometimes they've overlapped that with some stories of national church life. Or there's the occasional mission executive who makes a trip and reports at an area conference. Now and then a Mennonite from the Two-Thirds World studies at a North American Mennonite seminary and from there makes a speaking circuit through congregations. And then those among us who can afford it time- and money-wise may attend a Mennonite World Conference assembly, which rolls around every six years.

For most of us, that has been the extent of our exchange with Mennonite fellowships elsewhere in the world. We haven't intended to be provincial. We've simply lived, enveloped by the institutions and agencies we've built to carry out our church work. Meanwhile, God, who keeps working in unimaginable ways, has been building a church in many places. And the members of those fellowships, who have claimed their faith in often inhospitable settings, are looking for some serious exchange with fellow Anabaptists about how to live faithfully. They are looking for companionship that strengthens and leads to discernment.

Limited economically or by the political climate of their areas, these sisters and brothers have little resource for making such connections. Still victims of colonialism, French-speaking African Mennonites can't even talk to English-speaking African Mennonites. Indonesian Mennonites are being systematically crowded by the growing Muslim powers in the country. These African and Asian churches are committed, they are adult, they are making hard choices—and they are seeking friendship and fellowship with Mennonites in other places who can encourage them, stand with them, help them choose as they ought and sacrifice what they must.

> ***Whether we know it or not, we are surrounded by clouds of witnesses on the other four continents who are every bit as serious as we are about fusing our faith and our lives.***

Shift in global church: We are witnesses—if we decide to pay attention—to a shift in the global Mennonite church. There are substantial households of faith off our shores. Whether we know it or not, we are surrounded by clouds of witnesses on the other four continents who are every bit as serious as we are about fusing our faith and our lives.

How do we reach each other? How do we forge connections that offer spiritual strength in both directions?

I see grace in Mennonite World Conference's modest character. To simply offer fellowship, communication and facilitation—with little suggestion about how—is a gift from God.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Such open spaces leave room for our fellow churches in the Two-Thirds World to come with their urgency and their ideas.

And they are. So far the forums for this kind of exchange have been small. Two summers ago a gathering of global Mennonites took place in Zimbabwe. MWC's General Council—a group of about 100 people—met to worship and work at matters of faithfulness. The meeting was on African soil, and African Mennonites and Brethren in Christ planned much of it. We talked about syncretism: When is Christianity appropriately local in its forms and practices and yet still assuredly Christian? We talked about the effective march of Islam into all corners of Africa and Asia. We discussed women in leadership, frankly and painfully, and we sang boisterously. And we heard a passionate and persistent call from an Indonesian for global interdependence, for mutuality, for level-eyed giving and taking.

> ***This isn't some polite sharing of common interests. This is a call for support and solidarity from Mennonite people who live daily as neighbors to torture and death threats.***

Gathering ready for heaven: In Calcutta in January 1995, at another tiny global gathering, the Indians who belong to the various Mennonite denominations there asked that the next MWC assembly—to be held in India in 1997—be a time for them to work out their own vision of what it means to be Anabaptist Christians, that it be an occasion for them to own the vision, which until now was delivered to them by missionaries.

We also heard confessions during that meeting, including a poignant one from Europe, where Mennonite membership is declining. One delegate asked how we can help each other understand the cost of discipleship, and claim it, rather than run from it.

And we heard of imaginative connections being formed. In Colombia a battered church is calling for the formation of a network of congregations who are willing to stand with each other—internationally—in matters of peace and justice. This isn't some polite sharing of common interests. This is a call for support and solidarity from Mennonite people who live daily as neighbors to torture and death threats.

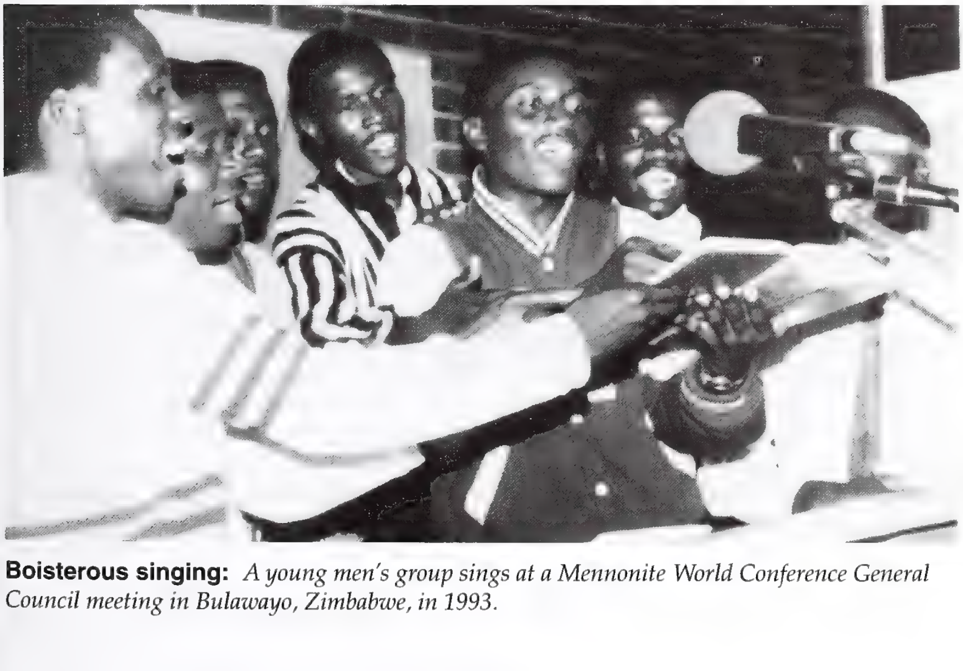
But again, this was a small meeting in a small room. Yet the passion for Mennonite global connections is mounting, largely fueled by Mennonites in the Two-Thirds World.

So how does that happen? Where is the delicate point at which MWC takes on enough machinery to be effective in a networking role yet stops short of being encumbered organizationally? Its weakness institutionally allows it to hold some promise. It isn't "owned" by any agency or conference. But can it survive if it isn't anyone's first and primary place to belong?

That sounds like typical North American worry. But how do we steward this organization's possibility for many things—global accountability, mutuality and interdependence—without killing it by overbuilding it, on the one hand, or by neglecting it, on the other?

How do we enlarge the room where such powerful witness as I described has taken place? As Raul Garcia from Argentina put it in a moment of reflection recently, "We are all looking forward to being together in heaven someday. Why can't we move just a little closer to each other now, as we journey along?" How that happens is for all of us to figure out.

Phyllis Pellman Good, Lancaster, Pa., is one of two North American representatives to Mennonite World Conference General Council.



Paul Schrag

Boisterous singing: *A young men's group sings at a Mennonite World Conference General Council meeting in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in 1993.*

• •

harmony

Menno Wiebe

from the midst of them
I sang the song
joining my sound
with those of the gathered ones

from pages
numbered all the same
we sang
with indicated pitch and rhythm
we uttered words
that flowed
from heart to God
from heart to heart
together

upward we sang
sometimes feebly
sometimes forcibly
all in the hopes
that God's inclining ear
would hear our sonant prayer and
despite our frequent splinteredness
embrace our hopes for harmony

Menno Wiebe lives in Winnipeg.

Letters

A MENNONITE YET NOT A MEMBER

As one of the statistics that Gordon Houser quoted in his Nov. 28 Prologue (the 3,300 people that have left General Conference Mennonite Church membership in the last 10 years), I felt compelled to write.

I was raised and nurtured in my Christian faith by my parents and the close-knit family of First Mennonite Church in Allentown, Pa. After attending Bluffton (Ohio) College and working at Camp Friedenswald and Camp Men-O-Lan in the summers, I suppose I should have met and married a good Mennonite boy, but I didn't. In graduate school I met a terrific Irish Catholic and through long talks about our faith, hopes and fears for the future we found we had a lot in common and decided to become life partners with the commitment that wherever we worshiped we would do it together. In the last 20 years and several moves that church experience has taken many forms.

First we were part of the beginning of the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, with all the struggles a new church entails. At that time we met at 8 a.m. Sundays to enable those who were members in other established churches to continue their involvement there. Tom and I used that opportunity to be active in Washington University's student Catholic parish as well as the Mennonite fellowship.

After moving to Escanaba, Mich., we continued attending both a Mennonite church and the local Catholic church each Sunday. After the births of our daughters we found we had to make changes—toddlers don't handle two consecutive church services well. Another move found us in Williamsport, Pa., and we found our niche by attending Sunday school and Bible studies at the local Mennonite church, then mass at the Catholic church up the street.

We now live in rural northeast Michigan, where the closest Mennonite church is 40 miles away. We needed to find a church closer to home and somewhere in between our house and the hospital to allow us to worship as a family as often as Tom's busy medical practice allows. We chose to join a Lutheran church that accepted us as a family: Tom, who occasionally needs the familiar liturgy of the Catholic church, our two teenage daughters, our son, who was not baptized yet, and me, who told the pastor that even if I joined the church I didn't think I could ever call myself a Lutheran.

I've been asked why we didn't try starting a Mennonite fellowship. My answer is that our priority now is our children. Being part of the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship was wonderful for the adults involved but difficult for kids who need a peer group. The church we attend has a wonderful youth director, and we feel our children's faith is being best nurtured here.

We still read *The Mennonite* and *Festival Quarterly*, our children attend Camp Friedenswald, we support the work of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee. Being more familiar with those organizations makes us feel more comfortable sending our money there than to Lutheran Service. I use *Generation Why* Sunday school material from Faith & Life Press in my high school Sunday school class with the full approval of our church education committee because it's terrific material. Our son has now been baptized and our daughters have been confirmed, but not without questioning what they are taught in catechism. Our daughter, Naomi, when told in catechism to memorize Luther's "Small Catechism," asked, "Why should I memorize someone else's interpretation of the Bible when I am perfectly capable of reading the Bible myself?" Our pastor was caught speechless, a rare occurrence for him, but he admits enjoying our kids' inquisitiveness.

The result of this well-blended Mennonite/Catholic/Lutheran family is that I've learned to appreciate the gifts and strengths of all the churches I've attended, and be more understanding and tolerant of differences. Finally, I have children who are comfortable in Mennonite, Catholic,

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Mexico—On Sunday, Sept. 17, 1995, seven people were baptized in a small stream at a high point in the third section of the Dinamos, a national park. Little by little we gathered at 9 a.m. at the Juarez Institute, where we normally have our worship services. Some had left their houses about 7 a.m. and were already there waiting for the rest. After a time of meditation, words of encouragement and prayer, 36 people boarded a small rented bus. (Two people accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior before we left.) Two families followed the bus in cars. Forty-five of us arrived at the scene.

We had a time of praise and worship, and testimonies of those who were going to be baptized, as well as a biblical reflection.

Four of the seven who were baptized are from the same family. It was a day of blessing for the "New Life Christian Church," moments in which we experienced the presence of God and were challenged to be faithful to him. *Carmen and Vicente Minino*

Gaborone, Botswana—Mme. Mmangwedi is the founder of the Utlwang Lefoko Apostolic (Hear the Word of God) Church. She is a woman in her late 40s who came to know the Lord in 1982. Over time her prophecy of drought and famine came to pass, and Botswana entered into a long, severe drought. People were drawn to this woman. Their love of Scripture is the basis for the name and it is their wish that all hear the Word of God. My involvement with this small group is to meet with Mme. Mmangwedi each Tuesday for Bible study and discussion. *Erica Thiessen*

Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches because they've attended them all, either with us or with friends. We hope we have helped bring closer to realization the unity of the entire Christian church. I may no longer be a member of a Mennonite church, but my strong Mennonite roots have helped me bloom wherever I've been planted and transplanted. I wouldn't count that as a loss. *Lois Weidner Marshall, Spruce, Mich.*

STIGMAS OF PRISONERS, TOO

A powerful testimonial was published in the Dec. 26, 1995, issue, "I Don't Belong Here," by Jan Eitzen (page 3).

I am an inmate in the Kansas prison system. The struggles Eitzen had to endure are similar for most men and women who are incarcerated. Same stigmas, just different institutions.

Her words, "I believe that complete healing is nearly impossible as long as taboos about mental illness remain in our communities," ring loud and clear. We are all in need of understanding, love and acceptance. As a Christian community, we should not shun and continue to punish, but should encourage one another. As Paul writes from his last imprisonment in Rome, "Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Colossians 3:12-14 NRSV).

It doesn't just make a difference, it is the difference. *Brian Lionberg, Hutchinson, Kan.*

Ideas your church can try

The combined youth groups at **Trinity Mennonite Church** and **First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan.**, led by Corey Miller, one Friday night offered free baby-sitting between 6 p.m. and midnight. The youth provided supper, snacks, games and activities, as well as some sleeping accommodations.

Bible

A strange vocation

A *meditation on* Acts 10:9-23

Byron Rempel-Burkholder

When I began my first term of service in Zaire, part of my orientation was to try one of the local delicacies: caterpillars, cooked in a spicy sauce with some greens, peanut paste and lots of yellow palm oil.

From the Zairian's perspective, caterpillars make a delicious meal, and they are rich in protein. Most missionaries, however, are never convinced that these insects are the best option for Sunday dinner—although the more eccentric have been known to develop a taste for them.

Eating caterpillars helped me understand what the apostle Peter experienced one day while lodging with his friend Simon the Tanner (Acts 10:9-23). It was noon, and like many pious Jews he wanted to use this time for prayer on the flat rooftop.

God gave Peter a vision of food, an astounding apparition of mammals, reptiles and birds. Peter heard a voice telling him to get up and make a meal of these animals. He was shocked. "Surely not, Lord! I have never eaten anything so gross in all my life. You know it is only primitive barbarians who would eat that." But the voice insisted, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

In the previous 400 years, the Israelites had developed a worldview that clearly distinguished between "us" (God's chosen people) and "them" (everyone else). The Hebrews, by virtue of birth, were in, while the Gentiles were out.

The Gospels pick up the theme. Notice the number of outsiders who were key players in the passion and the resurrection of Jesus. Remember Simon of Cyrene, the bystander who was made to help Jesus carry the cross to Calvary? He was an African. He was low enough on the social scale that the authorities picked on him first.

Witness the Roman soldier who commented, as he saw Jesus breathe his last, "Surely this was the son of God." Look at Mary Magdalene, the converted prostitute, the first to see Jesus alive on Easter morning.

The people closest to the cross of Jesus were outsiders, ironically rejected by the in group of God's people. As the writer to the Hebrews reminds us, the cross was erected outside the city gate, at a site where insiders, including Jesus' own disciples, feared to tread.

All these features of the passion drama offer a jarring suggestion: If the cross is important to us, we will find ourselves on the side of the outsiders, advocating for their place in God's kingdom. Otherwise the cross is simply a charm, a decoration around our necks or in our churches.

We're also confronted with questions of our identity. When we describe ourselves to others, what do we emphasize? "We Mennonites are no longer poor immigrants. See, we've bought houses in the suburbs. Some in our ranks are politicians, some are famous musicians and writers. We have assimilated."

Some of these achievements are good gifts. But are they the essential definition of us as a faith community? When we describe ourselves, will we say that our identity is connected with poor Bangladeshis across the ocean or with Natives or blacks living in our prisons? Do we want to be remembered as people who risked crashing through walls of ethnic and social division to join the outsiders?

God calls us, wherever we are, to choose the outsider as a primary point of reference in our sense of who we are. God calls the church to choose a strange vocation: to be an organization that exists primarily for the benefit of its nonmembers.

It was this kind of choice that Peter had to make that day on the rooftop as the word of God came to him afresh. God was calling him to join the outsiders, those people he thought were barbarians because they ate pork. And Peter responded.

Byron Rempel-Burkholder is pastor of Faith Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

Profile

More than 30 years of service in Calcutta

Margaret Devadason is a blessing to many.

Pearl Sensenig

Many people have benefited from Margaret Davadason's kindness and selflessness during her more than 30 years in the Mennonite Central Committee Calcutta business office.

Margaret recalls her introduction to the MCC office when she interviewed for a secretarial position. Then MCC director Vernon Reimer and his family lived downstairs. As she lifted her sari to step over children's paper dolls scattered in the doorway, she recalls thinking, What am I getting myself into?

Later, as the only Indian staff person among North American MCC volunteers, in an office filled with unfamiliar equipment, the thought reoccurred more than once. She adapted to the tasks at hand, however, and soon became known among office staff for her sunny nature and hearty laugh.

Margaret says she "fondly remembers" the people who served with MCC India over the years, many of them through the PAX program. In particular she recalls those who supported her in 1968, when her husband died unexpectedly, leaving her to raise their 2-year-old daughter and 3-month-old son alone.

In the 1970s, MCC India's focus shifted from relief to development work, and Davadason was appointed business manager. She later oversaw the accounting of a $500,000 (U.S.) budget. However, she does not let the mounds of paperwork crowd out personal contact with people.

"The most rewarding part of my job is seeing people who had nothing moving up and doing well," she says. "It thrills me to know a little help, a listening ear, a pat on the back or a word of encouragement has gone a long way to help somebody. That's what I believe Christian service and MCC's mission are about."

She recalls a young Pakistani refugee who came to the MCC office years ago to ask for a pair of glasses. "At that time funds were low, so I told her to come back later, but she was extremely insistent and said she needed glasses to get a job."

Howard Zehr (MCC)

A motivating force: *Margaret Devadason*

Now Ashirwad is becoming more independent but they still look to Margaret for direction and advice.

Thrown from a balcony: Margaret helped her get glasses, and the woman found work. Later the woman married and went to live with her husband's family. There she was mistreated and, after being thrown from a balcony, she sought assistance at the MCC office.

Margaret and the other staff admitted the bruised, emotionally distraught woman to a hospital. They introduced her to the Bible, which she read during her convalescence. A year later she was well enough to get a job in a beauty parlor.

"Today she is a radiant, joyful Christian, sharing her life with others, especially children and the elderly. She is a witness and example, and I have a lot to learn from her about trusting God," Margaret says.

About four years ago Davadason helped organize Ashirwad, a group of 10 impoverished Calcutta women who crafted Christmas ornaments. "The women came to Ashirwad without much hope. Now I think they see a future; they press on and don't give up," she says.

Today Ashirwad is still made up of 10 poor Calcutta women who fashion Christmas ornaments and kites. Self-Help Crafts of the World remains the main market for the crafts, but they have found other markets, too. The women's earnings have increased.

Margaret deserves much credit for Ashirwad's success. Doug Dirks of Self-Help Crafts says Ashirwad wouldn't have succeeded without Margaret's support. She was the motivating force to get Ashirwad going. In the early years she served as the supervisor. During lean times she continued to have confidence in the women. Now the group is becoming more independent but they still look to Margaret for direction and advice. She is like a "second mother" to them, according to Doug.

Margaret now works as director of the Calcutta office of Mennonite World Conference to help with planning the MWC Assembly in Calcutta in January 1997. Following this assignment she plans to retire from her years of faithful service.

Pearl Sensenig works for Mennonite Central Committee Information Services.

News

Weapons buyback works in Mozambique

Maputo, Mozambique (MCC)—Last November an unlikely group gathered at an abandoned military training field here.

Soldiers, defense force commanders, bishops, church leaders and Mennonite Central Committee workers witnessed the destruction of 282 bazooka rockets, 275 mortar mines, 88 mortars, anti-personnel mines, explosives, hand grenades, shells and other military hardware, a legacy of Mozambique's 15-year civil war that ended in 1992. The group watched for two hours as military personnel arranged the weapons, laced them with dynamite and set fuses.

The destruction was part of the Christian Council of Mozambique's program "Transformation of Arms into Hoes," launched in mid-October 1995. People who deliver weapons to the church office receive bicycles, sewing machines, tools or tractors donated by German church organizations. The program also runs a truck, fitted with presses and power saws, that travels to various churches that serve as weapons collection points to destroy guns on the spot.

Mozambique has been awash with weapons. Hungry Mozambican refugees were selling AK-47s in South African townships for as little as the equivalent of $6 U.S./$8.20 Cdn. In the early 1990s, Mary Yoder Holsopple and other MCC workers began trying to find ways to aid in disarming the region. Local church leaders had already begun examining the possibility of buying back and destroying weapons.

From this early dreaming emerged the current program of collecting weapons and exchanging them for useful farming and household tools. Grass-roots support has been strong. The government also supports the program and has supplied military specialists to help out.

As the group stood by the weapons cache, they found the experience eerie. MCC worker Debi Leeper remarked, "I've never before been this close to the tools of war." Anglican Bishop Denis Sengulane asked, "Did you ever believe your peace theology would lead you to a scene like this?"

No one knows how many weapons

Fremont and Sara Regier (MCC)

Bombs away: *Anglican Bishop Denis Sengulane surveys weapons about to be destroyed as part of the Christian Council of Mozambique's "Transformation of Arms into Hoes" program. People can exchange weapons for sewing machines, tractors or other tools.*

Inside the news

Congress overrides annuities lawsuit / p. 14

Grass roots ready to end Sudanese war / p. 14

CPTer in Hebron goes to court / p. 16

Jubilee curriculum makes happy teachers / p. 17

Kansas church disbands / p. 18

The North Korean government has given permission for the first non-government agency to be formed in the country. Civilian Peace Cooperative and Promotional Association is being formed to assist recovery from flooding in North Korea that left 500,000 people homeless. MAP Asia, an affiliate of MAP International, based in Georgia, signed an agreement Nov. 8, 1995, with the North Korean government's approval, to help form the new agency.

• • •

The Mennonite Central Committee-supported Palestinian Center for Rapprochement in the West Bank town of Beit Sahour has been awarded the 1995 Pfeffer Peace Prize. (See the March 28, 1995, issue of *The Mennonite*, page 4.) The prize, sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, based in Nyack, N.Y., includes an award of $2,500 U.S./ $3,400 Cdn. It is given annually to individuals or groups that have dedicated their energies to building structures of peace by nonviolent means. The center is a grass-roots peace group that facilitates dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. It began in 1988, when Palestinians and Israelis began to hold discussions in private homes in Beit Sahour in order to break down stereotypes between the two peoples. The group initiated a series of public actions encouraging Israelis to come to Beit Sahour, "not as occupiers but as guests." Dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis continues in Beit Sahour twice a month. On both sides the majority of participants are young adults.

Mennonite Disaster Service will hold its all-unit meeting Feb. 9-10 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif.

• • •

Six members of Christian Peacemaker Teams dressed as angels entered a Toys-R-Us store in Chicago on New Year's Day to sing out against violent toys. About 40 community people gathered outside the store to join in a celestial choir of angels dressed in white sheets and tin foil wings. The choir sang traditional Christmas carols adapted for the occasion. Several parents brought their children to join in the witness. Martha Robinson, a mother of three and member of the 57th Street Friends' Meeting, said, "My husband Eric and I brought our whole family. It's hard to keep children focused on the message of nonviolence. Everything around them is violent. In our meeting we have had lessons about creating a war-toy free zone."

• • •

More than 50 religious leaders were willingly arrested inside the U.S. Capitol Nov. 7, 1995. They were protesting what they called the failure of federal officials to consider the needs of the poor in the current budget debate. The religious leaders were peacefully led away by police after refusing to heed warnings that they were violating federal law by demonstrating inside the building. Speaking to reporters before the arrests, Jim Wallis, editor of the evangelical magazine *Sojourners*, called the federal budget a "moral document." "It is immoral to balance [the budget] on the backs of the poor, the elderly and the children," he said. A police spokesperson said the protesters faced maximum sentences of $500 fines and six months in jail. Those arrested were released later in the day without bail. No trial date was immediately set. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

remain in Mozambique. But the initial response of local people is an indication that, given adequate financial support, this ongoing project of "transforming arms into hoes" could be responsible for the destruction of a significant number of weapons. *Fremont and Sara Regier*

Pricey lawsuit derailed by new legislation

Newton, Kan. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)—Christmas came a couple of weeks early for some 1,900 U.S. nonprofit organizations, including the General Conference Mennonite Church.

President Clinton on Dec. 8, 1995, signed legislation to head off a class-action lawsuit over gift annuities from nonprofit organizations.

The suit had asked that all charitable annuity funds nationwide be returned to their donors plus triple damages. Several organizations had already settled out of court.

"Technically, the lawsuit is still there until the judge dismisses it," said Randall Jacobs of the Mennonite Foundation. "This [law] basically wipes out all legal claims the plaintiff is trying to make."

The class-action suit against the 1,900 members of the American Council on Gift Annuities included charges of fixing rates for gift annuities in violation of antitrust laws. The council is an actuarial service for charities, determining suggested rates for gift annuities.

The suit grew out of a Texas case brought in December 1994 by a guardian of a woman who had gift annuities with several Lutheran charities. A judge in October 1995 expanded the suit to class-action status. Legislation in response to the suit was introduced in both houses of Congress this summer and passed unanimously.

The new law exempts charities from antitrust legislation and amends securities laws for charitable trusts.

"So in effect, charities can do what we've been doing for a hundred years," Jacobs said.

A board member of Charitable Accord, a nonprofit lobbying organization for charities, Jacobs helped work for the bill's passage. What took less than six months to get into law might otherwise have taken years, Jacobs said. And Congress had a full agenda this year with wrangling over budgets, reforms and a government shutdown.

In addition to the General Conference, other Mennonite members of the American Council on Gift Annuities are Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and the Mennonite Foundation. *Rich Preheim*

Sudanese grass roots push for peace

Akobo, Sudan (MCC)—Something new is in the air in war-torn southern Sudan. Several years ago, when asked what the church was doing to make peace, Sudanese Christians' answers were vague, emphasizing international efforts or high-level negotiations. Over the past year Sudanese have come to realize ordinary people can make a difference—if not in Sudan's North-South conflict, at least in the conflicts within the South.

Only the elderly can remember a time, 40 years ago, when Sudan was not at war. The civil war has taken thousands of lives and displaced most of the southern population. Over the past five years Sudan has been one of the highest recipients of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) material resources, including food, school kits and other items.

The war has several dimensions. The government, representing the more Arabic and Muslim population of northern Sudan, is trying to impose strict Islamic law on the South, whose population is largely African and increasingly Christian. Splits have occurred among rebel factions in the South, leading to massacres that often involve civilians. Traditional ethnic and regional conflicts add to the violence.

An example of the increasing peace efforts of ordinary people took place in March 1995, when 11 men and women from the Akobo Presbyterian Church walked for peace to meet and talk with those from the neighboring clan who were responsible for the latest cycle of killings.

The events leading up to the Akobo

peace delegation illustrate traditional conflicts. A neighboring group had raided cattle from Akobo, killing five people. Members of the victimized group followed the perpetrators and slaughtered them.

This would have created an escalating cycle of retaliation, according to Peter Gai Lual, leader of the Akobo peace delegation. Lual's group sees the delegation as the beginning of a process that can be applied to an ever-widening circle. "We are starting with the grass roots, with the [Nuer] people themselves. Later we will go to the Dinka and to faction leaders," said Lual. "Local people are fed up with this war."

Over the past year the New Sudan Council of Churches, MCC's partner in southern Sudan, has been encouraging local peace initiatives like this. "We are trying to teach Jesus' teachings on peace and that they are to apply here and now. People haven't heard that before," says NSCC staffer Louise Reiman. "Our task is to introduce Jesus' idea of loving the enemy, then to stay out of the way as [local people] run with it."

The NSCC has supported various local delegations, prayer services and workshops on biblical principles and the practice of peace. Sudan Peace Prayers held in April 1994 in Akot attracted several thousand people, some walking hundreds of miles to attend. A peace conference in Akobo lasted from late August into October 1994 and also involved thousands. Toward the end, some pastors met with a rebel leader to express their weariness with the war and their criticisms of his actions, promising to be more outspoken in the future.

A conference in Ikotos resulted in a call for creating "peace scouts," young men from various villages designated to keep peace and solve problems.

According to Bishop Paride Taban of the Diocese of Torit, the peace scouts idea came from a traditional practice where respected men, ages 18 to 35, were designated "Monyomiji," or "village protectors." Their role was to troubleshoot problems and identify offenders, who would then be referred to village justice processes.

In this new adaptation, the peace scouts would represent more than one village and incorporate biblical principles. Villages are currently designating young men to undergo peacemaking training and spiritual discipline. When a wrong occurs, it will be their duty to confront the wrongdoer and serve as a "bridge between villages," working out problems without resorting to weapons, says Taban. MCC has contributed $3,000 U.S./$4,096 Cdn. to the peace scouts initiative.

Peace efforts at the international and factional leadership levels have not stopped. But many church leaders, like Bishop Taban, have shifted their

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Fed up with war: *Peter Gai Lual (center, with hat) leads a peace delegation from Akobo, southern Sudan, to a neighboring community to discuss cattle theft and resulting retaliatory killings.*

The third biennial Mennonite Arts Weekend will be held Feb. 2-4 in Cincinnati. For information, contact Bob Wells, (513) 281-0793.

• • •

The 1995 Bluffton (Ohio) College yearbook received first place with special merit through American Scholastic Press Association. Second-year student Kathy Davis edited the book and will edit the 1996 book.

• • •

Eden Mennonite Health Centre, Winkler, Man., is sponsoring workshops on forgiveness led by Bernie Wiebe of Menno Simons College in Winnipeg. The workshops are March 5 and March 19. Contact the center at (204) 325-4325.

• • •

Bluffton (Ohio) College associate professor of music Lucia Unrau is featured on a Cambria Master Recordings release, *Simple Requests—New American Music for Computers and Live Performers.* Unrau performs two pieces on the compact disc, which was released to media in December 1995 and will reach stores in the United States, Europe and Japan in February.

• • •

Paul and Betsy Mogomela from Botswana visited Mennonite churches in Langham, Sask., and Morton, Ill., during a 10-week stay sponsored by Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in September, October and November 1995. Points that impressed the couple included cooperative church work, strong Sunday school programs, involvement of women and lack of movement and hand clapping in church. They also noted North American affluence, the use of heavy machinery, and elderly people living in retirement centers rather than with family as cultural differences.

The annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale will be held March 8-9 in Peoria's Civic Center Exhibition Hall.

• • •

A half-day conference on the Christian response to violence will be held at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C., April 13. Cost is $10. Contact Henry Krause at (604) 530-0333.

• • •

The annual meetings of Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S. members will be held in Calgary, Alta., Feb. 15-17. MCC and MCC U.S. board members will discuss proposed program plans and budgets for the coming year. An evening program will be held Feb. 16 at 7 p.m. The sessions, open to the public, will be held at the Dalhousie Mennonite Brethren Community Church, 551 Baroc Road N.W., Calgary. Some board and staff members will speak in area churches on Sunday, Feb. 18.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is contributing $10,000 U.S./$13,700 Cdn. for windmill and other building reconstruction in a Mennonite colony located in a sparsely populated area near Guatrache, Argentina, some 500 miles (800 kilometers) southwest of Buenos Aires. A 10-minute tornado, followed by hail and heavy rain, roared through the 1,300-member Remeco Colony on Dec. 20, 1995, destroying buildings (including a school) and livestock. Sixty-three families were displaced. This disaster follows a drought that already promised a poor harvest. Because of crop failure and ravaged food-storage silos, MCC may assist further with food supplies. Colony Mennonites in Paraguay and other Latin American countries are investigating ways to assist the Remeco colonists through donations and loans.

Sudanese women work for peace

Akobo, Sudan (MCC)—Women may hold the key to peace, say some southern Sudanese.

"Women are by nature peacemakers. They have a heart of understanding that won't accept children and elders being killed," says Rebecca Joshua Akwaci, an organizer of the Mennonite Central Committee-supported Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace.

SWVP was formed in March 1994 by a group of displaced Sudanese women in Nairobi. It has sponsored several peace events.

Suzanna Aluel Mohammed, leader of the Catholic Women's Association in Mapourdit, puts it like this: "We want to collect women from all the factions and groups to meet and to talk about peace. I am willing to go anywhere ... to talk peace. If God calls me, I will go."

"If we go to Khartoum [Sudan's capital] and they arrest us and hold us prisoners, I am willing because it is the way of peace," she says. "If it means that women must be killed in order to stop the fighting, we will accept that." *Howard Zehr*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Ready for peace: *Suzanna Aluel Mohammed*

emphasis to the grass roots in southern Sudan. "Since last year," Taban says, "I've done 90 times more than when I was going for peace talks in Nairobi." *Howard Zehr*

ACTIVIST'S JOURNAL

Lessons from court in Israel

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—On Dec. 12, 1995, I appeared in court in Jerusalem to serve as a witness in a case against Moshe (not his real name). Moshe is a 15-year-old Israeli settler from Hebron who participated in an attack against Christian Peacemaker Team members Carmen Pauls, Dianne Roe and me on Oct. 25, 1995. We had been in Hebron to work at violence reduction since June 1995.

We discussed the pros and cons of testifying and concluded that testifying would be beneficial—not to seek revenge but to hold Moshe responsible for his actions. One of our goals was to suggest remedial consequences.

On Oct. 25 at 9 p.m., several Israeli settler adults led a group of some 60 settler youth in a demonstration in Hebron. Pauls, Roe and I saw about half the settler children spray-painting Palestinian shops.

At about 9:30 p.m., approximately 10 of the youth (including Moshe) began to throw eggs and stones at us. Five Israeli border police officers came to assist us and were also egged. When the children and some adults began to yell at us, the police indicated that the settlers "ordered" them to leave.

We left with the police to make a statement at the station concerning Moshe, whom we could identify.

In early December I was asked to participate in a pretrial investigation to determine whether the court had enough evidence to proceed with the charges against Moshe. I agreed.

In court I was cross-examined by Moshe's attorney, who wanted to know if I was with an organization. I explained that CPT is committed to justice and nonviolence, that I am a Mennonite and a pacifist. The trial provided a forum to explain CPT to at least a couple of settlers. The trial also provided opportunity to explain pacifist response to violence.

The hardest question the cross-examiner asked was, "Do you want to see the boy punished?"

I hedged, then finally answered yes. I said I don't believe prison or a fine accomplishes much, but would like to see the boy do something that made him aware of the effect of his actions. I hoped this would promote change. I said I didn't like the word "punished" but preferred "held responsible."

The court experience was productive, whether or not Moshe is charged. I believe that after the trial, Moshe, his mother and I were better able to see each other as humans. Humanizing the victim and the attacker to one another is crucial if we ever hope to reach the understanding that can lead to better relations. *Wendy Lehman*

New curriculum gets warm reception

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When Laurie Castello and her husband were looking for a church home, they wanted a church with a good Christian education program for their children. "Sunday school provides a shelf for their faith to grow on," says Laurie.

So in 1993, when she agreed to become Sunday school superintendent at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., she was happy to learn that a new Anabaptist children's curriculum, Jubilee: God's Good News, would be available by fall 1994.

Several years ago, Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church had primarily used the Foundation Series. In the last few years, however, most of the teachers had created their own curriculum because they felt Foundation Series was no longer up-to-date.

"Every denomination has its distinctive set of beliefs. I was uncomfortable with the fact that we were teaching different things to each age group," says Castello. "I kept wondering if the children were getting a true picture of the Mennonite faith."

Amanda Fast, who is the children's Sunday school coordinator at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., likes the way Jubilee places high priority on the Scriptures. Every lesson in the Jubilee curriculum, which is for children age 2 through grade eight, is focused on a Bible passage. "I think it will help the children come away with a stronger faith and a better understanding of what God teaches us," she says.

Stories: Storytelling is one of the primary tools for communicating the Bible message in the Jubilee curriculum. "Kids are naturally good listeners. While it may take a bit longer for the teachers to learn how to tell stories, it is an effective approach that is good for all ages," says Gail Veitch, a parent and Sunday school teacher at Stirling Avenue Church.

"It brings the children to a different level of understanding. It helps them remember the story better," Castello agrees.

The activities that follow the storytelling time reinforce that week's Bible story. "My daughter is not just coming home with stickers and colored things. She is coming home with a story," says Castello.

She recalls how her 4-year-old daughter came home after a Sunday school class with a paper bag stuffed full of newspaper. When she asked her daughter what it was, her daughter told her that the bag represented one of the rocks that Joshua used to make an altar.

Jubilee

GOD'S GOOD NEWS

The fact that the curriculum has a variety of activities that are easy to use is a definite plus from the teacher's perspective, says Veitch.

"You don't have to buy a major amount of supplies. You can usually find what you need within your own classroom," she says.

Fast finds Jubilee is easily adaptable for the small number of children they have at Hively Avenue Church. The congregation has 15 children who participate in Sunday school. Fast says a teacher told her that even when only one child showed up for class one Sunday, they still had a good time.

Continued on next page

UNICEF estimates that half a million children die each year to help pay the interest on the Third World debt, according to *Sojourners.* Hunger and other preventable causes of death are ignored because the money needed to alleviate those problems has been used by the developing nations to pay back World Bank or International Monetary Fund loans. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The five agencies sending the most missionaries to the former Soviet Union, in descending order, are Youth With a Mission, Campus Crusade for Christ, Church of Christ, Navigators and Southern Baptists. These groups account for 76 percent of the missionaries, of which only 28 percent are career missionaries. (*MARC Newsletter*)

• • •

Catholic theologians are debating the need to evangelize extraterrestrial beings, reports Ecumenical News International. Two Geneva astronomers say they have discovered a planet in another solar system similar to ours that theoretically could support life. Piero Coda, theology professor in Rome, told the Vatican: "If life were found on the planet, then it would also have been contaminated by original sin and would require salvation." But a professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University argued that extraterrestrial beings might not need salvation: "We know that earthmen sinned, but we know nothing of beings in other worlds." The discovery of planet 51 Pegasus has been confirmed by California astronomers, but many in the scientific community remain skeptical of the discovery. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

A 16-year-old visitor to Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., gained entrance to and cracked the school's computer security system Dec. 2, 1995. For five hours, anyone on the network could access faculty documents and staff records that normally would have been inaccessible. EMU students noticed and reported the break-in. The school has identified the intruder and is working on an out-of-court settlement. A review of computer activity indicated no students took advantage of the opportunity to access classified files. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Esther Augsburger is bending 3,000 guns into a 16-foot plowshare in downtown Washington. The National Commission of Fine Arts approved the sculpture Dec. 14, 1995, for placement in Washington. She got the idea a year and a half ago, according to *Christianity Today*, after hearing how Washington police had gathered 6,000 guns in exchange for boots and gift certificates. Augsburger asked for half of them to make up the raw material for her art, and local police enthusiastically agreed. She has been welding ever since. (*Salt of the Earth* and *Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Colorado may be the first state to tax church properties. Supporters of a Colorado initiative say they have enough signatures to place a measure on November's ballot that would impose property tax on churches and other nonprofit groups. The proposal divides nonprofits into two groups. Those that house orphans, the disabled, the elderly and the homeless would be exempt from taxes. Others, including churches, hospitals and soup kitchens, would have to pay. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Castello points out that the background material provides teachers with the support they need to do a good job. "We need to feed our teachers, especially since many of them don't have the chance to participate in adult Sunday school. Also, everyone has different theological backgrounds," she says.

Veitch believes that the education the children receive in Sunday school will help them be familiar enough with the Bible to be able to make the right decisions in their lives. "The world today is saying so many contradictory things. People are able to justify anything," she says. "I want the children to realize that the bottom line is what God says."

Jubilee: God's Good News is a cooperative effort of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ, Friends United Meeting, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite Brethren. *Carla Reimer*

Stirling Avenue involves parents

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Gail Veitch and Laurie Castello hope that the children who attend Sunday school at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., are receiving more Christian education in their homes, because they believe that one hour once a week is simply not enough time to adequately nurture a child's faith.

"We need to educate and encourage parents about their role in the spiritual upbringing of their children," says Castello. To help address this need, Stirling Avenue Church started a Sunday school class for parents about how to nurture their children.

The congregation also has asked parents to help supervise some of the larger Sunday school classes of children. "It's a good way for the parents to see the Jubilee curriculum firsthand. The net result is that the parents become more involved and there is an improvement in the children's behavior," says Veitch. *Carla Reimer*

Kansas church closes after 95 years

Newton, Kan.—On Jan. 28 the Mennonite Church of Lehigh, Kan., will hold its last worship service. The service will mark the end of 95 years of worship for the congregation.

The church began the difficult discussion of closing about two years ago. Membership had dwindled to about 80, with a weekly attendance of 15 to 20, from a high membership of 262 in 1945.

"We just kind of dwindled away," says pastor Willard Schrag, who has served the church eight years. "We thought it was poor stewardship to spend all we had on ourselves to keep the church going."

Lehigh's troubles may sound familiar to many rural churches. Lack of work opportunities in the community forced the church's young people to move away. Today only one regular attender is younger than 60.

The school consolidation in 1965 that took away the town's high school was a key point in the church's downturn. Teachers that contributed leadership and money to the church had to leave. Other local businesses closed.

"When the school closed down, there was nothing left in town," Schrag says. "We just lost community, and how do you build community?" He says many of the newcomers to the community are commuters from Wichita, 50 miles south, "people who sleep in Lehigh and are not interested in establishing relationships."

Other Lehigh churches had closed earlier, making the Mennonite church the last church in town. The approximately 25 remaining attenders may go to other churches, possibly in nearby Hillsboro.

A buyer has been found for the church property. Church members hoped the buyer would take interest in maintaining the building they had built in 1969, with members providing some of the labor. The buyer will probably turn the church to commercial uses. Funds from the sale will help establish an endowment to maintain the church cemetery.

The final service will be held Jan. 28 at 10:30 a.m., with a special service at 2 p.m. Former members and friends of the church are invited. *Larry Penner*

Food services director at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Position includes noon cafeteria and evening banquets.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Ken Herr, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **physician** to provide medical expertise in the development and administration of insurance products. This half-time position, at MMA's headquarters in Goshen, Ind., includes helping to make underwriting decisions and determining the medical necessity of services, supplies and treatment. This individual will also serve as the chief spokesperson for MMA on medical matters. The candidate must have a current state medical license and at least three years of experience in a specialty.

As a church-affiliated insurance and financial services organization, MMA serves people all over the United States who are associated with churches that have roots in the Anabaptist tradition. MMA offers excellent working conditions and benefits.

For further information, call **Jerry Troyer at 1-800-348-7468** or write **P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.**

Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, a Christian urban day school K-8, seeks **head administrator** with commitment to the vision of providing quality Christian education with an Anabaptist emphasis in the ethnic and economic diversity of the city. Responsibilities include general administration, business management, educational supervision, supervision of overall maintenance, and assistance in fund development. Administrator supervises staff of 12 to 16, coordinates volunteer services and reports to board of directors. Qualifications: professional teaching experience and administrative experience. Master's degree in education or related field and active membership in Mennonite or other Anabaptist church desirable.

Send letter of application and current resume **by Feb. 1** to **Fred Doering, Search Committee Co-Chair, c/o Grace Community Church, 4155 S. Rockwell St., Chicago, IL 60632.** For further information, **call Richard Weaver, Board President, (419) 358-6826.**

East Coast churches distribute food

Kevin King (MCC)

Helping out: *Members of Iglesia Evangelica Menonita Ebenezer unload grocery bags on Nov. 3, 1995, for distribution to needy people in the Bronx, New York City. Each year churches and conferences in the East Coast region of Mennonite Central Committee assemble some 6,000 bags for distribution through Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Philadelphia, New York City and Lancaster.*

Assistant editor position

The General Conference Mennonite Church invites applications for the position of **assistant editor** of *The Mennonite*.

Applicants should have writing, editing, organizational and some administrative skills and a willingness to support the conference goals. Skills in desktop publishing and design are desirable.

Submit a resume **by Feb. 15** to **Editor, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org**. Deadline may be extended.

For more information contact Gordon Houser or Dave Linscheid at the above address or at (316) 283-5100.

About a third of the U.S. population is overweight, and $33 billion is spent each year in attempts to lose weight. In the underdeveloped world, an estimated 190 million children under the age of 5 are chronically malnourished. (*Encounter*)

• • •

Nearly one of six Americans fears they could become homeless, according to a Gallup Poll released Dec. 12, 1995. That's the economically ravaged middle class talking, said Gene Boutalier, executive director of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. "The middle class has one foot in the middle class and one foot on a banana peel," he said. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

A survey of pastors in northwest Iowa shows that pastors take a stand on controversial issues about 1.7 times per year. The information came from a survey of pastors commenting on their pastoral and prophetic roles. Examples of prophetic issues were abortion, homosexuality, capital punishment and women in ministry. Michael Yoder, a sociologist at Northwestern College, conducted the study. He said that pastors in mid-career were more willing to speak out. Pastors reported they received more positive comments than negative ones when they did speak out.

Ben-El Child Development Center is seeking to fill the position of **director**. This progressive community mental health agency, located in west central Ohio, needs an energetic, professional leader to guide it through an exciting era of impending expansion. Candidates must have a master's degree in administration, social work, or a related field. Candidates will find management experience to be an asset.

Contact or send resume to **James Burkett, Adriel School, Box 188, West Liberty, OH 43357; (513) 465-0010**. EOE

AMBS announces

Evangelism and Mission Institute

One month of courses and events growing out of AMBS' commitment to mission and evangelism

July 8-19

Christian Ministry in the Urban World
(in Chicago)
Gary Martin, M.Div.; pastor with mission experience in Chicago

The Rural Church: Leadership and Renewal
(July 8-12)
Dean Linsenmeyer, M.Div., Ph.D., rural pastor; former university economics professor

Service and Development: Contribution to Mission *(July 15-21)*
John A. Lapp, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC);
Nancy Heisey, former associate secretary for MCC administration; currently in early Christianity Ph.D. program

Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Context
Robert Ramseyer, Ph.D., and
Willard Swartley, Ph.D., AMBS

July 19-21

***Mission Conference:* Mission and Partnership**
Peter Rempel, Ron Yoder, and Institute instructors

July 22-August 2

Expansion of Christianity in South Africa: Mission, Ideology and Justice
Gerald Pillay, Ph.D., University of South Africa

Church and Healing
Lawrence Yoder, Ph.D., Eastern Mennonite Seminary

Gospel and Western Culture
Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary

June and August feature regular AMBS Summer School courses.

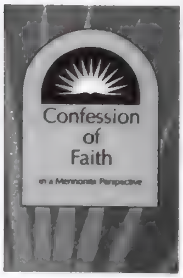
For more information, call AMBS,
1 + 800 964-2627

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, Indiana 46517-1999
219 295-3726
1 + 800 964-AMBS (2627)

Preserving Our Faith

Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective



Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective was adopted at the delegate sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church meeting at Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30, 1995. The 24 articles and summary statement were accepted by both groups as their statement of faith for teaching and nurture in the life of the church.

The confession of faith is arranged in four groupings:

- Articles 1-8 explore themes common to all Christian churches.
- Articles 9-16 examine the church and its practices.
- Articles 17-23 describe the life of discipleship.
- Article 24 clarifies the reign of God.

Paper, 112 pages, $4.95; in Canada $7.10.

Available through your local bookstore or by calling 1 800 759-4447; in Canada call 519 746-2872 (Provident Bookstores—MC, Visa, Discover). If ordering by mail, please include 10% for shipping—minimum $2.50. Canadian customers, add 7% of total for GST.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999
HP%MPH@MCIMail.com

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
HPCAN%MPH@MCIMail.com

PRESIDENT
Canadian Mennonite
Bible College

cmbc

The Presidential Selection Committee for Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites nominations and applications for the position of president.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College is the college of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and is an approved teaching center of the University of Manitoba. Primary programs of study are offered in Bible and theology and music. A variety of courses is also offered from the broader arts and humanities. A strong sense of community, as rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, is central to the college program. The president is responsible for the general administration of all aspects of the college. Preference will be given to candidates who stand within the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, who have an earned doctorate in a teaching area of the college and some graduate-level training in theology.

All inquiries will be held in strict confidence. **The appointment begins July 1, 1997.** Application with a resume and letters of nomination should be received by **Feb. 29, 1996**. Send to:

David Brubacher
Presidential Selection Committee Chair
Box 305
Vineland, ON L0R 2C0.

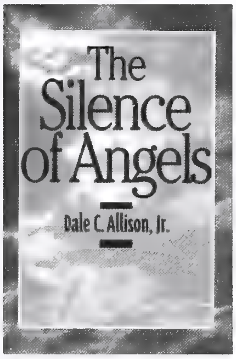
Reviews

BOOKS

SPIRITUAL EMPTINESS

The Silence of Angels *by Dale C. Allison Jr. (Trinity Press International, 1995, 133 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor



This collection of six essays displays the wide spectrum of knowledge hinted at in Allison's excellent biblical studies. Here he attempts a more popular approach as he addresses contemporary issues from a perspective fed by biblical and early church tradition.

Each essay looks at an area of spiritual emptiness in our contemporary culture: from our being out of touch with nature, to our busy, noise-filled lives, to God's hiddenness, to our ennui and the need for alertness, to our following celebrities rather than saints and heroes, to the need for an ascetic imagination.

Allison draws on many and varied sources, from which he sprinkles quotes throughout the text (I would have welcomed footnotes). He argues his points less along a logical line than by accumulating a chorus of voices to represent various positions and adding his own pithy conclusion. The impact, then, is as much aesthetic as rational and therefore all the stronger.

While Allison confronts the sloppy, spiritually lazy habits of modernity, he does not come across as holier than thou. Nor does he simply worship the past. He seems well acquainted with past and present, and includes his own experiences—both positive and negative.

In his first essay he offers this point, which can serve as a warning and as a disclaimer: "Our convictions, however much they may be thought of as the conclusions of arguments, are often heavily indebted to environmental factors we fail to perceive because we are too close to them."

These essays help us perceive some of those environmental factors. They question some of our convictions and strengthen others. But more than that they encourage us to live more faithfully to what we know to be true. Allison shows that the Christian past has much to teach us about faithfulness in the present.

OFFENSIVE SPEECH

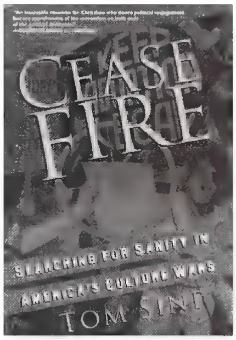
Cease Fire: Searching for Sanity in America's Culture Wars *by Tom Sine (Eerdmans, 1995, 298 pages)*

Reviewed by Karla Morton, Harleysville, Pa.

Are you up for a good challenge? Are you willing to be open-minded about your worldview? Sine's book sets out to help us, as citizens of another kingdom, face the increasing polarization of our society.

Sine takes on the polarization, not only in society but in the church, that the religious right (Evangelicals) and the politically correct left (mainline Protestants) have caused through their expanding reliance on secular tactics to further their worldviews.

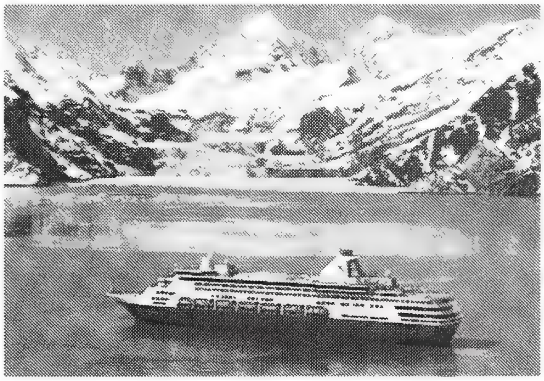
Sine, as an Evangelical, admits that he is harder on the Evangelicals in his writing because he is one. I can see how conservative readers could be offended by his critiques. Overall, though, Sine's observations of both conservative and progressive Christians are fair and to the point.



Cease Fire is divided into four sections. In the first, Sine looks at the historical roots of both the religious right and politically correct left, their misdiagnosis of end-times theology and how it affects their political ideology. Sadly, our seduction into the political foray has brought us to this place of polarization. Sine says that somehow the call to a biblical faith has gotten lost in this contentious culture war. Too often, Christians on both right and left have allowed their political views to shape their faith, according to Sine.

In the second section of the book, Sine looks at the respective visions of the future for both the right and the left. The visions of the different groups, of course, are divergent. In the third section, we see where the vision for the future of both the right

TOURMAGINATION offers New Tour...



ALASKA '96

Enjoy majestic beauty: shimmering glaciers, deep fjords, soaring eagles, thundering caribou, 1,000-mile cruise and much more with Mennonite friends from all over North America.

Call Today
1-800-565-0451
(US & Canada) for a brochure

Ask about our other tours: Mexico, Jamaica, Australia/New Zealand, Vienna, Europe

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg.# 1567624

1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

and left could lead us in the next millenium. Sine predicts that the more conservative right will have the upper hand politically, and he outlines what this will mean in the coming years. Either way, the future as presented here leaves much to be desired.

In the final section, Sine presents a third way. He proposes a radical, biblical way that transcends the politicized agendas of both left and right. Here Sine envisions Christians who base their worldview not on political ideology but upon Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

In *Cease Fire* we are given a clear assessment of present-day Christianity by looking at the biases of both the left and the right, the visions that these biases set forth, and a clear, biblical vision for the church that is not based on modern culture but on our ancient faith. Sine has written a book that could offend a number of people, but didn't the prophets of old do the same?

BIBLE HELP

A Non-Churchgoer's Guide to the Bible *by Michael Gantt (Good Books, 1995, 184 pages)*

Reviewed by Gary Daught, Brandon, Man.

In his introduction, Michael Gantt writes, "The Bible is not a private manual for churchgoing people. It's a book for everyone." This conviction serves as the basis for a book that aims to provide points of entry to the Bible for people "who may have an interest in the Bible but have little ['insider'] knowledge of it." And in the end even insiders may come away with some helpful reminders from this accessible and easy-to-read volume.

Gantt admits that the Bible is a large and varied work, written over a long period of time many many years ago, in a foreign land with strange languages and unfamiliar customs. And while these facts may overwhelm and discourage, Gantt concentrates on putting the interested reader at ease. For example, instead of trying to get into the Bible by reading it cover to cover, he writes, the reader may find it more helpful to think of the Bible as a library (which it is), and begin by choosing a book that attracts his or her attention.

All critical questions have been set aside, and the Bible is presented at face value. Seasoned students may find this annoying, but again, the seasoned student is not the intended audience. The author gives constant attention to the structure and arrangement of the Bible's writings as it has been drawn into a whole. This attention suggests connections that help the reader move among the writings, regardless of where one begins. I particularly appreciated the sweeping panorama Gantt creates with his summaries of each book within their respective sections.

Gantt is not preachy, though he does finally conclude that the Bible's writings are not neutral in their portrayal of life; they have a moral character that solicits a response in decision and action. Honesty demanded this conclusion, and as such the conclusion should not offend the reader. The book is worthy of recommendation.

PROMISE KEEPERS' VIEW

The Awesome Power of Shared Beliefs *by E. Glenn Wagner (Word Publishing, 1995, 193 pages)*

Reviewed by Heinz Janzen, North Newton, Kan.

This book works at a simple doctrinal center for the Promise Keepers movement while maintaining its stance of unity in diversity. Parts I and III are written by Wagner, a vice president of Promise Keepers. Part II is culled from other writers. They propose five basic beliefs: the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and "the Redemption of Man." These roughly correspond to the first seven articles of the new *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. However, Wagner's book places "Bible" first, before God. Does he intend to add it to the Trinity? Or does he mean that we cannot know Father, Son and Holy Spirit apart from Holy Scripture?

Yet the Bible chapter was most helpful, telling the saving deeds of God rather than theories of inspiration. The God chapter first stresses God's love, then moves on to seven other characteristics, such as holiness. Human behavior is shaped by the kind of God who is worshiped.

The Jesus Christ chapter relates his virgin birth, sacrificial death for our sins and glorious resurrection. It fails to mention the cross as our example for discipleship. The whole book is weak on discipleship, though it encourages some personal ethics. Military service is not criticized.

The Holy Spirit chapter uses scientific analogies when life stories of the Holy Spirit's working would be more helpful. It does suggest helpful themes: illumination of divine truth, walking in the Christian way, a servant stance toward humankind, and deterrence from sectarian smallness. The redemption chapter again highlights sin and forgiveness but says little about the Christian walk.

The closing chapter calls on men of Promise Keepers to unite to transform society, particularly in the area of love, prayer and race relations. Yet it suggests a divisiveness toward those who cannot agree with this formulation of Christian doctrines. The book speaks disparagingly of "ecclesiastical organizations," yet Promise Keepers is organizing a nationwide network. In one place it disclaims being a political organization; in another it calls men to unite for political action.

Thousands have been led to a deeper and more consistent prayer life through Promise Keepers. Many will find this book helpful, but it disturbs me.

GANG STUDY

Understanding Gangs *by Carol Duerksen (Fast Lane Bible Study Series, Faith & Life Press, 1995, 48 pages)*

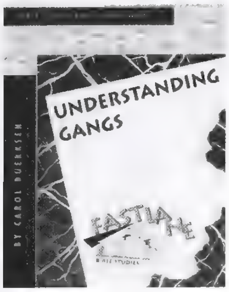
Reviewed by Lu Ann Hain, Lititz, Pa., with Carol Rose, Lancaster, Pa.

Understanding Gangs, a Bible study series for junior high youth, is broken into four sessions, each with biblical applications. There are handouts in each section, including an informative parent handout. They are easy to understand and most are helpful.

"A Case of Colors" explores our awareness of what gangs are. The study does a good job of pointing out the stereotypes associated with the people involved in gangs. The first handout is thought-provoking.

"Where Do You Belong?" deals with why young people get involved in gangs. Two reasons highlighted are (1) the absence of one or both parents, and (2) not having emotional and material needs met. Gangs act as surrogate families for most of the youth that join. The "Try My Nikes" handout will get you into the shoes of a gang member.

"Do You Know Better?" deals with violence and its harmful effects on everyone involved. The short stories accurately depict situations that plague youth.



"Dying for People to Care" presents the only way to prevent youth from joining gangs: Love. There needs to be someone in each child's life that can make him or her feel loved and supported.

I found some of the study disturbing. In "Out on a Limb" a girl lets two men into the house (not a safe thing to promote). The author also says that not all people involved in gangs are black or Hispanic. But her other example was of an Asian gang. This gives the impression that only minorities are involved.

Growing up, I had cousins in three rival gangs. They joined at an early age, and this is where they felt important. You have to reach children early. I think that this study would be most effective with youth who need an introduction to these issues.

Resources

- **Runaway Buggy** by Carol Duerksen and Maynard Knepp (WillowSpring Downs, 1995, $9.95 U.S.) is the story of Amish youth Jonas Bontrager struggling as he becomes a man. Order from WillowSpring Downs, (316) 367-8432; fax (316) 367-8218.
- **Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective** (Herald Press, 1995, $4.95 U.S./$6.95 Cdn.) is the new statement of faith developed by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 or e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **Clueless and Called: Discipleship and the Gospel of Mark** by Robbie Miller (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.), a new offering from the Generation Why Bible Studies series for high-school youth, is a five-session study of the Gospel of Mark. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484, e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **Do the Right Thing: Ethics Shaped by Faith** by Jennifer Halteman-Schrock (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn.), a new offering from the Generation Why Bible Studies series for high-school youth, is a six-session study of ethics. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484, e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **41 Ways to Build a Better Youth Group** by Mike Bogard (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) shares insight into the needs of youth ministry. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 or e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **God Cannot Let His People Die** is a new photo display on Christians in southern Sudan, who in the midst of persecution find blessing in prayer, music and meeting together. Available from Mennonite Central Committee at 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151; or from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.
- **Elfrieda and Peter Dyck Tell MCC Stories** is a two-part video series now available for free loan from Mennonite Central Committee at 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151; or from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381, or from your nearest MCC office.

India resources

- **Ashirwad: Blessings in India** is a seven-minute video that tells the story of women from Hindu, Muslim and Christian families in Calcutta, India, who have improved their lives despite obstacles. Their craft group makes ornaments, mobiles, wall hangings and kites for Self-Help Crafts of the World. Contact the Mennonite Central Committee office nearest you.
- **Partners in India** is a new 15-minute video that relates stories of three Mennonite Central Committee partner groups in India who have a vision for improving their communities. Contact the MCC office nearest you.

- **Following in the Footsteps of Paul**, by G. Edwin Bontrager, is a video series that draws evangelism and church growth principles from early centuries and applies them to North America. Available from Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa. Two videos $59.95 U.S., student book $6.95 U.S., teachers guide $14.95 U.S.
- **Spiritual Life in Anabaptism** by Cornelius J. Dyck (Herald Press, 1996, $16.95 U.S./$24.25 Cdn.) provides devotional resources from the writings of early Anabaptist leaders.
- **MCC Resource Catalog for 1995-96** lists more than 400 audiovisuals, photo exhibits and printed materials about Mennonite Central Committee, hunger, peacemaking, care of creation, Native issues, resources for children, and more. For a free catalog contact MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151; or MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381, or your nearest MCC office.
- **I Promise You a Crown: A 40-Day Journey in the Company of Julian of Norwich** by David Hazard (Bethany House, 1995, $7.99 U.S.) is a collection of Julian of Norwich's writings arranged as devotional readings.
- **Christian Mission: A Case Study Approach** by Alan Neely (Orbis, 1995, $20 U.S.) uses case studies to explore Christianity's encounters with other religions to examine sensitive issues.
- **Simplicity: Notes, Stories and Exercises for Developing Unimaginable Wealth** by Mark A. Burch (New Society Publishers, 1995, $12.95 U.S.) explores voluntary simplicity as a rewarding and fulfilling lifestyle.
- **The Cambridge Daily Reading Bible** (Baker Book House, 1995, $22.99 U.S. softcover) takes the reader through the whole Bible in two years, using the New Revised Standard Verson.
- **Following Jesus: Biblical Reflections on Discipleship** by N.T. Wright (Eerdmans, 1995, $10 U.S.) contains 12 meditations that explore what it means to follow Christ today.
- **The Crown and the Fire: Meditations on the Cross and the Life of the Spirit** by N.T. Wright (Eerdmans, 1995, $10 U.S.) urges us to reassess our response to Jesus' death, resurrection and influence on our lives.

Moving? Let us know your new address.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 492
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

It's a small world

We live in a small world. U.S. soybean prices fall after a two-inch rain in Argentina. A flu virus in North America is said to have come from southern China. Try as we may, we cannot isolate ourselves fully from the realities around our globe.

In the *Mennonite World Handbook* (1990), Dorothy Friesen writes, "We can sit in Strasbourg or Harrisonburg or Winnipeg and know there is a coup in the Philippines or that six Jesuits and their housekeeper in El Salvador are shot and killed almost as soon as it happens, and yet we do not know that the factory one-half mile from our house is producing bullets or sensors or cluster bombs for those actions."

The stark contrasts between lives elsewhere on the planet and our own can feel alarming, even overwhelming. Yet our Lord bids us listen.

To a lawyer who asked him to define the meaning of "neighbor," Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). He tells his audience to expand their definition of "neighbor" to include not only those who are different, but those we deem our enemy.

"In this age of instant communication," Friesen writes, "my neighbor is South African, Honduran and Palestinian." We can also say, My Mennonite neighbor is Zairian, Bolivian, Taiwanese, Dutch or Australian.

We in North America can easily become myopic. We may complain about taxes or budget cuts or the weather but forget the majority of people around the world who do not have access to clean water or to medicine or to adequate shelter.

In the Mennonite world we work at our organizational structures or try to find someone to teach Sunday school or serve on the worship committee, all important tasks. Yet we lose sight of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. Many struggle with these same tasks, but others struggle with poverty, disease, persecution, oppression.

We need to be with them in whatever ways we can. How do we do this? We can learn about others through books, magazines (like this one), newspapers (though U.S. papers carry little international news) or TV (a poor source for information). A better way is to become acquainted with people from other countries and cultures. Opportunities abound through missionary contacts, colleges, language clubs.

Daily injustices: Travel to other cultures can be a great opportunity to learn about and be with our brothers and sisters there. (Consider the tips about travel on page 6.) Since being in the West Bank, I have a better appreciation for the daily injustices that Palestinians have had to face.

When Mennonites from around the world gather in Calcutta a year from now, one of their goals will be to "listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches." Representatives from each continent will present a message to the others as well as ask for counsel.

Each day's subtheme will be different, since each comes from a different context. The confessions and questions will vary. While Africans may ask how to respond to hunger or to Islam, and Latin Americans may ask how to respond to pervasive violence, North Americans may ask how to respond to consumerism and waste.

The questions will be different, but each will be seeking to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. We share Anabaptist beliefs, but we all want to know how best to be faithful to those beliefs in our respective contexts.

The gathering at Calcutta will undoubtedly be smaller than many other Mennonite World Conference assemblies. But this one may be more intense. It can be a "kairos" (opportune) moment, an important crossroad for the worldwide Anabaptist fellowship, one that can set a direction for years to come.

You may have seen the quaint painting of Christ knocking on an arched, wooden door, a visual interpretation of Revelation 3:20, in which Jesus addresses the church in Laodicea: "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me."

Pray that we as a Mennonite community can join our sisters and brothers around the world and together hear Jesus' voice and open the door to him. In our small, troubled world, his is the one voice we must listen to.
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

Inside

A new window on the world / p. 11

Let's teach our children well / p. 12

Mennonite churches open doors to homeless / p. 13

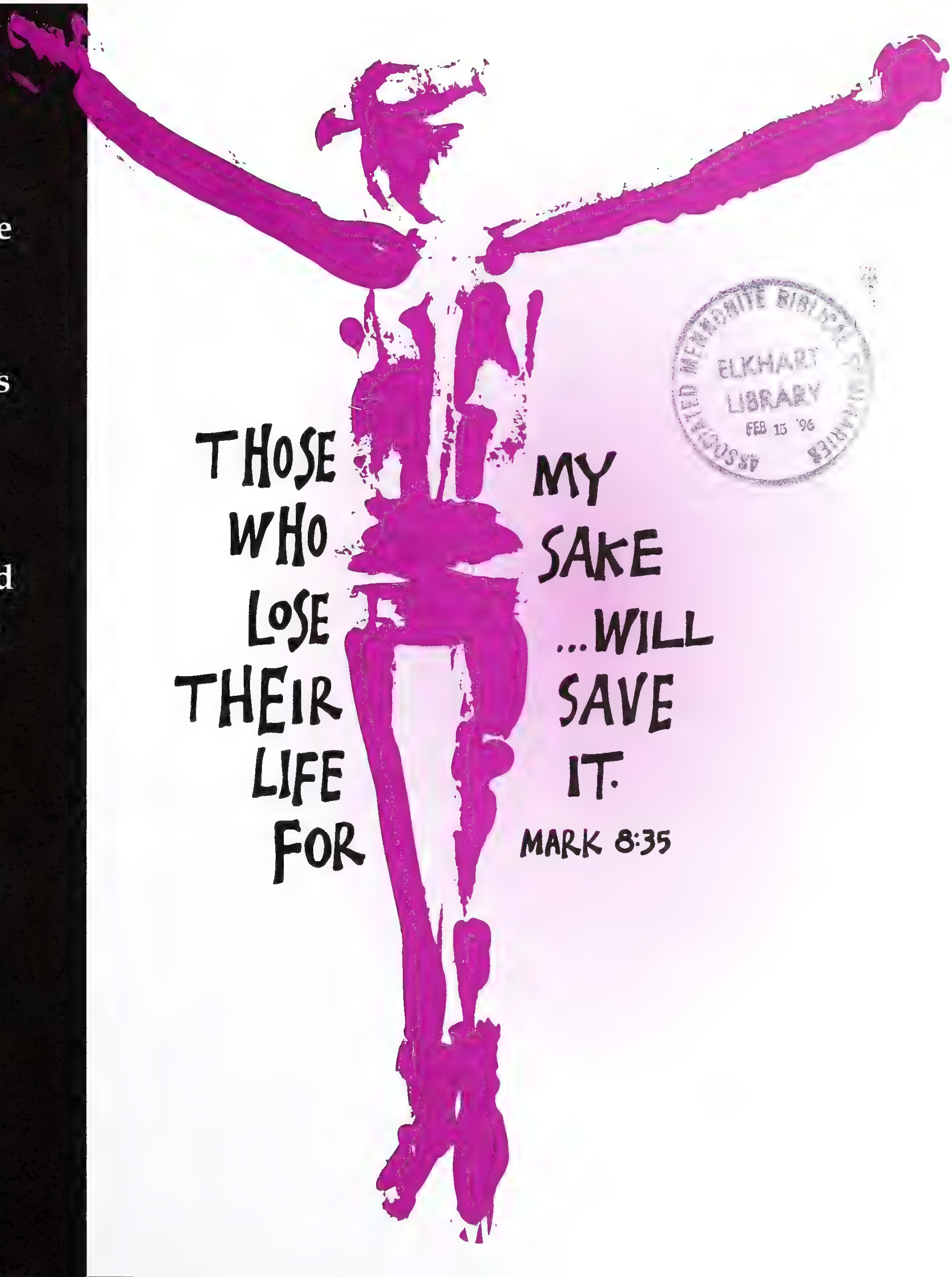
$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 03
FEBRUARY 13, 1996

- A time to face our dying (page 3)
- 7 meditations on Lent (page 5)
- A time for reflection and rejuvenation (page 9)


THOSE WHO LOSE THEIR LIFE FOR
MY SAKE ...WILL SAVE IT.
MARK 8:35

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL LIBRARIES
ELKHART LIBRARY
FEB 15 '96

Prologue

Mennonites have never been too keen on observing historic church traditions like Lent. But times may be changing. At least Mark Miller thinks so. He and five other Mennonite pastors from Colorado have put together a Lenten resource that I think individuals and congregations will find helpful. (See the story on page 9.) It includes outlines for Sunday worship services during the seven Sundays of Lent (including Easter) and an outline for a half-day Lenten retreat. The resource is available from Faith & Life Press for $10 (U.S. or Cdn.).

This issue offers you a number of reflections on Lent. Ronda Suderman King's article (page 3) is unique, as it considers Lent as a hospice experience for Jesus.

Mennonite Central Committee workers present seven meditations on Lent (beginning on page 5), one for each week. These were spurred by experiences with people around the world.

Speaking of which, read about Kristen Linkletter's experiences in Burkina Faso and what she learned from them (page 11).

J.B. Miller's "Fiscal Health" column (page 12) addresses how we might teach our children about handling money in a responsible manner.

May your experience of Lent draw you closer to "the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge." *gh*

Next issue: Personal stories of grace

Cover: Source of illustration unknown

Contents

FEATURES

3 Lent: a time to face our dying

We can learn to face our own dying as we remember Jesus' approaching death.

5 Seven meditations on Lent

Reflections for each week of Lent from Mennonite Central Committee workers

9 A time for reflection and rejuvenation

Pastors in Colorado have put together a resource for congregations to use during the Lenten season.

DEPARTMENTS

10 Letters
11 Profile
12 Fiscal health
13 News
19 Record
21 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Larry Penner

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail TheMennonite@gcmc.org

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

LENT:
a time to reflect

We can learn to face our own dying as we remember Jesus' aproaching death.

LENT:
a time to face our dying

Ronda Suderman King

Am I dying?" Peg* asked, insistent. When I said yes, she sank back onto her pillow and said, "Well, that helps."

As a hospice social worker, I have been intrigued, sometimes saddened and often encouraged by the ways people and their family and friends around them prepare for death.

Consider Lent as a hospice experience for Jesus. Jesus seemed aware of his "life-threatening" situation. He even predicted his coming death and resurrection early on in his public ministry. Was Jesus' experience human enough that we can gain something from his way of approaching death? Or do we understand Jesus only as God, which makes his ways of coping with impending death unattainable for us?

RNS

It is difficult for me to imagine what it must be like to face cancer and wonder how long I have to live. Even more unimaginable is to be told that my life expectancy is six months or less. Shock and disbelief must surely arise. At least that is what many people have told me as they try to explain their history of coping with illness as it progresses into a terminal illness.

Jack, a 57-year-old hospice patient, stopped significant communication with everyone, including his wife, when he was told of his terminal diagnosis. Debbie, 59, on the other hand, immediately called her pastor to plan her funeral (which really caught him off guard) and invited me to attend, saying, "It's going to be great."

When Jesus talked about his future suffering and death for the first time in the Gospel of Mark, the Scriptures record that "he said all this quite openly" (Mark 8:32). This may refer to

If we were able to articulate our sense of purpose as clearly and unapologetically as Jesus, would the facing of our dying be reformed?

his courage in speaking out in the public arena about his death.

Guilt: Thoughts and feelings that come soon after the shock deal with issues related to guilt, regrets, "if-onlys." Along with the if-onlys, people often review their life—a serious and sobering examination of one's purpose, past accomplishments and things one hoped to achieve.

In Mark, Jesus states his purpose clearly: "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do (1:38). … Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners" (2:17). Jesus knew what he came to do and he knew his message well: "The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (1:15). "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him" (John 17:1-2). If we were able to articulate our sense of purpose as clearly and unapologetically as Jesus, would the facing of our dying be reformed?

Balancing hope, resignation and acceptance is a delicate and ambiguous part of living with dying when death is more imminent than most of us care to know. How does one maintain hope while accepting death? Many times it is the family of a hospice patient, not the patient, who dictates that death and dying not be addressed. This is done with good intentions, often to protect the person from losing hope so they will not "give up" (die).

I believe our interpretation of hope needs redefining if we are to possess it throughout our dying. In Mark 8, Jesus foretells his death and resurrection and makes the following statements that relate to death and hope: "Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?" (Mark 8:35-37).

Terminal illness: Have you ever looked at that passage in light of you or a loved one having a terminal illness? As followers of Jesus, do we dare live and die with the courage it takes to die willingly? Or are the words of Jesus only prescriptive for our attitudes while we are in good health?

I often hear the following from my hospice patients and their families: "Death is a part of life." I believe it is an attempt to make sense of their pain and to integrate death into their life. On the other hand, Jesus indicates through his words about saving and losing one's life that living has as much to do with dying as dying has to do with living. In other words, Life is a part of death.

Often when one is dying there is an identity change from being one who gives to being one who receives. This is more than a simple alteration if it is to be graceful; it is a transformation. So much of our lives revolve around an identity of what we can do. As a body deteriorates, as one's limitations become more apparent, as one's dependency on others increases, it is imperative that a shift be made in order to really live while dying. The shift is to become content with one's being vs. one's doing. Or in more theological terms the shift from feeling adequate through grace vs. works. This is not easy. But if and when it happens I do believe that it will give opportunity for the dying person to bless others in manifold ways.

A spouse of a hospice patient told me the following story: Curt was already sleeping a lot and increasingly incoherent when he woke Denise up in the middle of the night (3:45 a.m.). He wanted to get out of bed, for which he needed help. Curt wanted to get out on the opposite side of his hospital bed so that he could sit on the couch (instead of his recliner) in order to sit next to her. Denise helped him to the couch and Curt put his arm around her and kissed her two or three times. Curt and Denise then sat arm in arm for about 10 minutes, after which she helped him back to bed.

What a precious moment! And how special for her that he thought to give her that kind of gift. A gift from who he was—her husband—instead of what he could do. He died five days later. I knew that Curt did not want to die, but it is evident that he was accepting of his increasing debilitation in a way that he was able to give a wonderful gift that will comfort Denise for a lifetime.

Gethsemane: When we believe that a loved one's death is near, it is a common practice to call family members home. Jesus, too, gathered his disciples around him in Gethsemane, requesting that they stay awake and pray. It is a time to gather together for support and love.

I remember well the short time we had with my mother-in-law before her death. We stood around her bed, singing, praying and crying as she breathed her last breaths. And her death was peaceful, just a gradual ending of the work of her lungs and heart. Did our presence make her death peaceful? It would be presumptuous for me to even suggest that. (Jesus' death was anything but peaceful.) But the gathering of loved ones gives evidence to the enduring quality of love that continues on, even after death.

During the six weeks of Lent, I encourage you to participate more fully in the commemoration of Jesus' approaching death by being more deliberate about facing your own dying. Be prepared for a passionate encounter with life.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord's face shine upon you and give you peace in your living and your dying.

Ronda Suderman King is a member of Mennonite Church of the Servant in Wichita, Kan.

**Names have been changed.*

Ideas for Lent

The following activities may help focus your thoughts and actions during Lent:

Week 1: Communicate more openly your fears and hopes regarding your dying to at least one person.

Week 2: Ponder your purpose in life overall. Choose your purpose for this one week and remain cognizant of it as much as you can. Be on the watch for the opportunities that Jesus will bring to help you fulfill your purpose.

Week 3: Thank God each morning for your life within your death. Thank God each evening for your death within your life.

Week 4: Willingly die in one area of your life. Some examples may include giving up a certain food for the week, fasting for one day, giving some money to the person you least want to, spending an evening in silence or turning off your television and not reading the newspaper for the entire week.

Week 5: Give someone a gift from your "being" instead of doing something for them.

Week 6: Organize a gathering of family and friends to celebrate your love for each other. *RSK*

7 meditations on LENT

1. Stones into bread?

Christians should witness to the world about what is important in life.

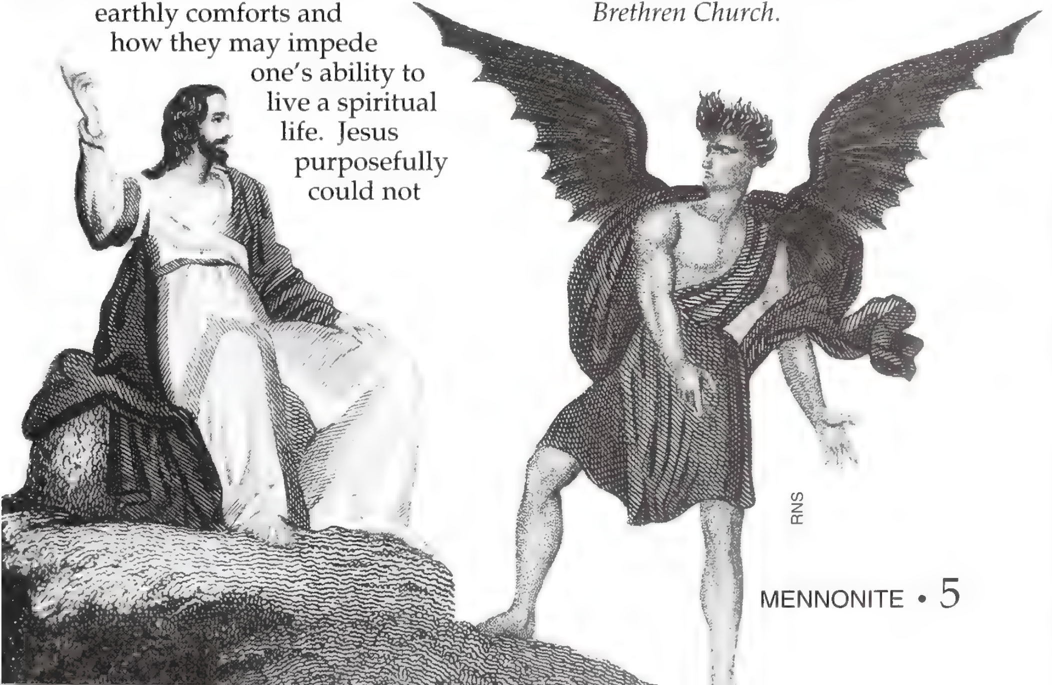
Tom Frantz

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted 40 days and 40 nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:1-4).

After 40 days of fasting, Jesus is in a frame of mind to wrestle with what is most important about human existence. He is first tempted to improve his physical comfort.

Jesus could have turned the stones into bread. He had great intelligence and power, capabilities with which he could manipulate his environment. Turning stones into bread could even have afforded a good example of economic development—locally available materials used to solve a human need.

So why did Jesus not succumb to this temptation? I believe that during his fasting, Jesus thought about earthly comforts and how they may impede one's ability to live a spiritual life. Jesus purposefully could not permit himself to get too comfortable, given his mission over the coming months.


RNS

How can we Christians today avoid turning stones into bread? Perhaps we must choose to live a life less comfortable than one we can easily obtain, given our intelligence, education and resources.

When we North American Christians possess the capability to manipulate our environment, do we use it for our own enhanced comfort or do we focus our energies on being the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world"? Christians have to witness to the world about what is important in life. The world will destroy itself in its never-ending striving for increased material comforts. Christians today have the same mission as Jesus. Like him we must choose to live simply.

Tom Frantz works through Mennonite Central Committee in agriculture services and community development in Brownstown, Jamaica. He is from Shafter, Calif., and a member of Shafter Mennonite Brethren Church.

2. Take, this is for eating

In Jordan, the breaking of bread sparks thoughts of Jesus.

Earl Martin

You never know when the stories of Christ will jump off the pages of the Gospels and right into our daily lives.

It happened to me when I heard the story of "Taysir the Egyptian" from Paul and Rebecca Pereverzoff, who serve with Mennonite Central Committee in Jordan.

Taysir—his full name is Taysir Al-Masri—has worked for MCC since 1986, mostly in agricultural programs. He's called "Taysir the Egyptian" because his family came to Jordan from Egypt seven generations ago. That would be like calling me "Earl the Swiss," since my forebears came from Europe in the 1700s.

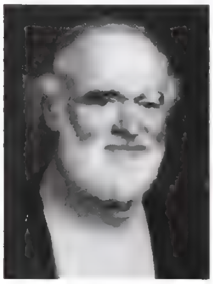
Earlier this year, Taysir, Paul and Rebecca went to the village of Mafraq in northcentral Jordan to participate in the dedication of its new bakery. MCC had provided funds to build the bakery, which would earn income to fund the village's kindergartens.

Taysir had explored the project for MCC. He had sat down with the villagers to discuss the request. When he established that it would be a worthwhile project, he recommended that MCC provide assistance. The villagers agreed to work together to build the bakery. They even created special ovens that could be heated with inexpensive diesel fuel.

This bakery would not make the kind of bread we are familiar with in North America. Rather, it would make the same kind of bread Jesus ate; here it is called pita bread. Because their ovens heat equally from above and below, the 12-inch circle of dough bakes as much from the top as from the bottom. This technique creates a pocket inside the pita.

As part of the dedication ceremony, the ovens were fired and, after a time, fresh, hot pita bread was ready. When the bread came out of the oven, Taysir sprang up and grabbed a loaf. He took one of the hot circular loaves and, in a fashion repeated daily from the time of Christ, gripped the pita with both hands and tore it into two. With a smile of delighted anticipation, he handed half to Paul. Then, in Arabic, he said, "Take, this is for eating." Ah, an echo two millennia old: "Take, this is for eating."

With awe, Paul the MCC worker joined Taysir the Egyptian in eating the steaming hot bread.



Earl Martin works with MCC Communications. Paul and Rebecca Pereverzoff are members of Pilgrims Mennonite Church in Akron, Pa. Paul is from Rosthern, Sask., and Rebecca from Vicksburg, Miss.

• •

3. A humble foot washing

God uses an act of service to answer their prayers.

Jonathan and Rosalie King

Knowing our work involves building earthen dams and wells, a pastor asked us to help solve water problems in a nearby village where people were getting sick and dying from drinking muddy, stagnant water.

We were glad the villagers were motivated and understood the cause of their health problems since it usually takes weeks, if not months, of meetings to arrive at this point. Therefore, we agreed to take the time to visit this village, although many other villages were also asking for help. We had prayed that we could work in a village where a nearby pastor could be involved and thus use the work as a means of sharing God's love. Here was God's answer.

After scheduling another day to come back and survey their village for a suitable site for a dam and a well, we shook hands with some grateful villagers and headed home on a dirt trail hardly wide enough for our motorcycle. About a mile out of the village our motorcycle got stuck in a huge mud hole that we couldn't go around.

Suddenly from nowhere a villager appeared and began helping us push the motorcycle out. In the process he was sprayed with mud, but he wasn't concerned about his condition, he was worried about Jonathan's muddy boots.

Then, like Jesus, who humbled himself and washed his disciples' dirty feet, this villager proceeded to find some water and was not satisfied until he had thoroughly cleaned our boots.

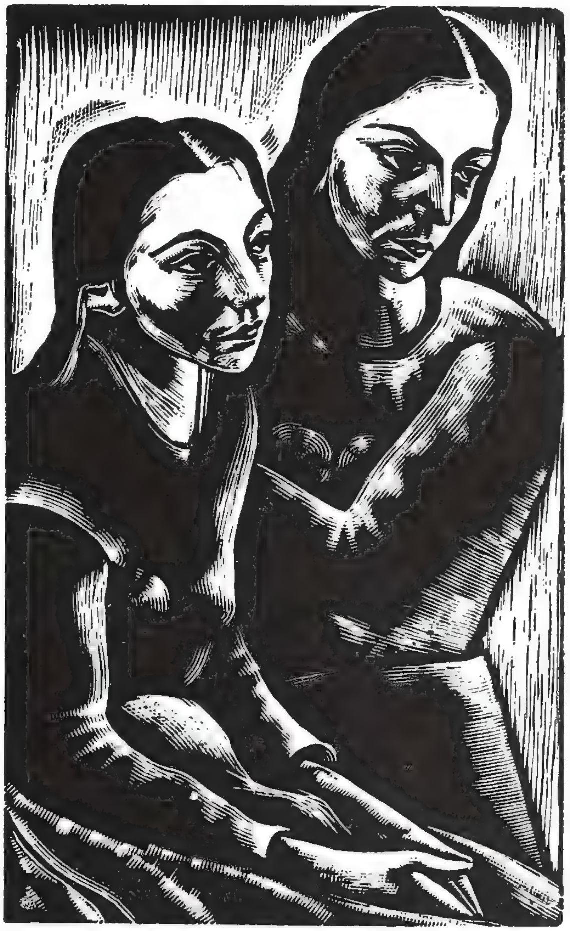
What a humble foot washing that was, and as we shook his hand to leave, we knew this was a village where God wanted us to work.

Jonathan and Rosalie King of Fisher, Ill., work with Mennonite Central Committee in Burkina Faso and are members of Gibson (Ill.) Bible Church.

4. Sharing with those who mourn

The story of Jesus' response to Lazarus' death instructs us on how best to accompany the bereaved.

Christa Eshleman



"Mary and Martha" by George Bunday

©1937 by David McKay Company, Inc.

Living in a house in which a member is acutely grieving over a family member's recent accidental death has put a new tint in the glass through which I read the Bible.

The story of Lazarus' death and Jesus' involvement with the mourning family, as related in John 11:1-45, is one for which different shades of meaning now jump out at me.

Both Martha's and Mary's first words to Jesus are accusatory: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." They dared openly share their anger and bewilderment; they knew Jesus was divine and could easily have prevented this tragedy.

And though Martha acknowledges, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day," this belief does not console her, no more so than the platitude, "He or she's in a better place" comforts the bereaved today.

Equally as amazing as Mary and Martha daring to question God is Jesus' response to them. He does not chastise the sisters for their grief over physical death nor for their naive questioning of a plan far more infinite than their human minds can fathom, nor for their doubt of God's love.

Instead, he goes with them to the tomb, accompanying them in their grief. And he feels such compassion that he weeps with them. He weeps with grieving women, even though he knows there will be not only a spiritual resurrection but also a physical resurrection for this man.

This amazing tale of identification with those who mourn stresses the importance of simple, unadulterated accompaniment: "For they shall be comforted," not "for they shall be enlightened to death's unimportance."

Jesus could have stayed objectively removed from these unenlightened women who don't seem to grasp that a man's death is just a blip on the screen of "The Plan." Instead he affirms the validity of their mourning. He immerses himself in the human reality that death hurts and that it tears away comfortable assumptions, exposing tough questions that some might say border on blasphemy.

The story of Jesus' response to Lazarus' death instructs us on how to best accompany the bereaved.

Christa Eshleman is an intern in the Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office. She is from Salem, Ore., and is a member of Salem Mennonite Church.

---

5. Dying with Christ on Good Friday

He saw the face of the man he wanted to die that night.

Fremont Regier

Songs and Scripture set a somber tone as Anglican Bishop Denis Sengulane led us in the Good Friday service. Lent was particularly difficult for me last year. My spirit was heavy. I felt sinful and distant from God.

We had begun praying the stations of the cross at various locations in the church sanctuary. Then, led by people carrying wooden crosses, we had all filed out, hundreds of us, into the moonlit school yard to continue our worship. Pictures and candles above us on the secondary school balcony reminded us of the successive phases of Christ's suffering on the way to his crucifixion.

The air felt heavy with death, and our spirits were weighed down with sadness as we returned to the sanctuary. Behind us a procession carried a narrow casket. They placed the open casket on the floor before the altar.

Bishop Sengulane invited us to come forward. "Gaze into the casket," he said. "Look until you see the face of someone who will die tonight; someone you will never see again; someone who will rise anew on Easter."

My turn came. I looked into the casket. There, reflected in a full-length mirror, was the face of the man I wanted to die that night.

My face. I was that man. With that man dying in the casket, I saw his sins of pride, negative attitudes and pessimism, anxiety, anger, compulsion to control, prejudice. All these were to die with Christ.

Coming out of that casket I also saw the faith image of the man who would rise to new life with Christ on Easter. And I found new meaning in Paul's words in Romans 6:8: "But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."

Fremont Regier of North Newton, Kan., works with Mennonite Central Committee in Mozambique and is a member of Faith Mennonite Church in Newton.

6. Garbage and repentance

Still wealthy in the midst of poverty

Bob Buxman

Somebody stole my garbage today. I don't know why that bothers me, but it does. Three days per week we put our garbage on the curb for the truck to pick up. That we have a curb indicates we live in a better-than-average neighborhood and may explain why someone stole our garbage.

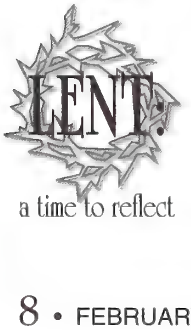
Nicaragua is becoming more impoverished daily; more and more people are fighting to survive in an economy shot full of holes. The person who stole our garbage was just getting a jump on the truck, getting the first opportunity to go through the garbage of a middle-class family, looking for the goods we throw away.

But that bothers me, and I'm not sure why. It's just garbage. We're pretty frugal in our purchases, we recycle, we compost. There was nothing there of value—I don't think.

So why does it bother me? Perhaps because I'm still a rich man surrounded by Lazaruses. And I still don't know what to do about it. Although I work with Mennonite Central Committee, serving, sharing, giving, not earning big bucks, I'm still the rich guy, and they are the hungry poor going through my garbage.

I garner a measure of peace in all this ambiguity when I try to live repentantly. Recognizing my ineptitude for perfection and God's aptitude to forgive and empower, I can go on by faith, following Jesus, listening, learning, crying, laughing, praying, changing directions, working, living in community, trusting, hoping.

Bob Buxman of Dallas, Ore., serves MCC as co-country representative with his wife, Barb, in Nicaragua. They are members of Dallas Mennonite Brethren Church, where Bob served as pastor prior to his MCC service in Central America.



7. A sympathy card for Easter

An innocent mistake offers a powerful message.

Mary Raber

A glass-fronted cabinet with many drawers and doors is an indispensable piece of furniture in a Ukrainian house. It dominates the living/dining room and provides storage space for dishes, linens and photo albums.

The cabinet also serves as a display case for china, vases, model racing cars and anything else the family considers beautiful or curious. In more recent years this may include boxes and bottles that came to the local Baptist church with a shipment of humanitarian aid from the West.

I was perusing the contents of one such cabinet at some friends' home when I noticed a greeting card in English propped against a teacup. A bouquet of pansies decorated one corner, and on the front it read, "With deepest sympathy on the death of your child."

The death of your child? I knew this family had experienced more than its share of grief, including the death of a daughter, but that had happened years ago when she was in her 40s. The death of a child? Supposing a card had indeed been sent in sympathy for that sad event, whom would this family have known who would send a card in English, before perestroika and before immigration?

Usually I try to refrain from reading other people's mail, but I was curious. I slid the glass door open and drew out the card. Inside was a printed message, a Scripture verse and another bunch of pansies as well as a hand-written message in Ukrainian. In several different colors with elaborate flourishes, someone had written: "Dear Grandma Olya and Aunt Tanya, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

I was only perplexed for a few seconds. Obviously a relative in the United States had unknowingly selected a sympathy card instead of an Easter card.

It struck me funny in a grotesque way. Imagine sending a sympathy card for a child's death instead of an Easter greeting. But of course that wouldn't bother my friends, who could only read the Ukrainian message. Still, it was funny that they would display the pretty card proudly, unaware of its meaning. I laughed aloud.

Then I stopped. Why not? Wasn't it actually less incongruent than lining up spray cans of deodorant as objets d'art? Why not send Easter greetings on a sympathy card?

The average human life has plenty of occasions that call for sympathy cards. Not only do children die, but hopes die, houses burn, cities collapse, food supplies give out, wars rage, refugees hit the road, people get sick, or things simply do not work out as planned. But for the Christian, at the back of all that fails, kills, hurts and disappoints, there is another message: Christ is risen!

It is not a message to be taken lightly and never to be offered to the suffering as a glib response for pain. Nevertheless, it cuts to the quick of the lost human condition. Christ is risen! No matter the circumstances, no matter the tragedy, we know God will have the last word. Christ is risen, and so shall we be raised.

How incongruent: "With sympathy on the death of your child" and "Christ is risen!" Yet what message could be more appropriate, truly suitable for any occasion.

Mary Raber teaches at the Donetsk Bible College in Donetsk, Ukraine, through Mennonite Central Committee. She is from St. Louis, Mo., where she is a member of Pilgrim United Church of Christ.

A time for reflection and rejuvenation

Pastors in Colorado have put together a resource for congregations to use during the Lenten season.

Carla Reimer

For many children, simple pleasures such as chocolate and ice cream are what make the world go around. Karla Kauffman was no exception. But growing up in a Mennonite church in Ohio, Karla also learned the importance of giving up her favorite foods as part of the Lenten season.

Today Karla is pastor at Fort Collins (Colo.) Mennonite Fellowship and still sees the value of that childhood lesson. "We all need to know how to hold things lightly," she says.

However, as she gets older, Karla finds the message of Lent is deeper than simply giving up one or two material items.

"The lesson for me is that what I think is the answer isn't necessarily the answer I need," she says. "It's about letting go and trusting that God will make everything all right."

She notes how Jesus chose not to heal Lazarus when he was sick but waited until Lazarus was dead to perform a miracle.

This Bible story is one of several highlighted in a new Lenten resource that Karla and five other Mennonite pastors from Colorado wrote for the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church and for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) of the Mennonite Church.

After reading the lectionary text, the group decided on the theme "O That Today You Would Hear God's Voice." "Lent is a time of quiet and devotion. It's a time for hearing how God is directly speaking in our lives," says Mark Miller, pastor at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Karla hopes the Lent resource will help "individuals experience God's invitation to be honest, to lay bare our souls, to be in relationship with each other."

She says that many in the church "are deadened to what it means to drink from the water of life that God offers us. Until we are thirsty, we don't know how deep the well is."

The Lent resource uses drama, music and visual art to express the Scripture passages. Karla likes the more experiential approach to worship because she feels it "helps faithful people in the church get rejuvenated."

The focus on Lent and other historic church traditions is a "relatively new phenomenon in the Mennonite church," says Mark. "Forty to 50 years ago, it was something to feared. Now it is something to be welcomed, embraced."

The shift in attitude is due in part to the work of Marlene Kropf, he says. Marlene is the minister for worship and spirituality for MBCM and teaches at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. (She also writes the column "Learning to Pray" for *The Mennonite*.)

Urbanization most likely is another factor, he says, noting that Mennonite pastors in cities often work together with people from other denominations. For example, as a result of his participation in three ecumenical groups, Mark finds he is "much more open to other religious traditions. I think we all can learn from each other."

Karla believes spirituality is an essential part of the faith journey. "It offers new living water. It makes all the difference in the world if one individual has the Good News within. Then, his or her faith is contagious," she says.

For Mark, paying attention to his inner spiritual life has helped him feel grounded. "It slows me down. I have a tendency to want to go too fast," he says. "It helps me look at time as a gift, to treat it with gentleness and respect."

The 1996 Lent resource, called *O That Today You Would Hear God's Voice*, is available for $10 U.S. or Cdn. from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484, e-mail newtonflp@aol.com; Resource Centre/Faith & Life Press Canada, 1-800-665-1954; or Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, (219) 294-7523.

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • •

"[Many in the church] are deadened to what it means to drink from the water of life that God offers us. Until we are thirsty, we don't know how deep the well is."

Karla Kauffman

Letters

STORIES OF MENTAL ILLNESS HELP

I very much appreciate Jan Eitzen's story, "I Don't Belong Here" (Dec. 26 issue, page 3). It seems to me that these types of stories serve several valuable purposes. First of all, honestly and openly discussing mental illness helps break the stigma of the illness. As long as we hide the stories, stigma is perpetuated. Second, stories help empower others to look for help and to open up. Third, stories help people who do not have experience with the illness gain an understanding of what it is like and of the agony it causes. So thanks to Jan and to your editorial team for her story. *Irma Janzen, Director of Mental Health and Disabilities, MCC Canada, Winnipeg*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

A JAPANESE CRUSADE, BEING ROBBED AT GUNPOINT, LOVING ONESELF

Fukuoka, Japan—A great experience was the three-day Fukuoka Gospel Crusade with evangelist Koji Honda Sept. 21-23, 1995. The Hakata Mennonite Church joined 24 other churches in planning and preparing for this outreach effort. About 230,000 handbills were distributed throughout the city. The special music by the 60-voice Crusade Choir (including Mrs. Koga and Mary Derksen from our church), instrumentalists, vocal groups and solos, was tremendous. Honda Sensei's messages were easy to understand, timely and powerful.

Only God knows the immediate, ongoing and future fruit from this effort. One of our seekers, Mrs. Miyoko Anai, made a decision for Christ the last evening. With God's help and the work of the Holy Spirit, we want to lead her to become a faithful follower of Jesus. *Peter and Mary Derksen, Commission on Overseas Mission worker*

Chicago—Linda and I were walking from our home on Adams to the parsonage to offer our condolences to Joan Gerig, who had just been told that her mother had died that morning in Iowa. We walk to church all the time, and just that morning had walked all around Garfield Park on our semi-regular 6:15 a.m., two-mile, in-the-dark outing with Joan and two older neighborhood ladies. So we didn't think anything about walking to the church at 8 a.m. But we made a big mistake when we took the shortcut past the liquor store on Fifth, then through the alley.

We crossed Van Buren and kept going down the alley toward Congress. About two-thirds of the way down I spotted a roofing nail lying on the street, and following my habit of preventing as many flat tires as possible, I bent down and picked it up. When I straightened back up, there was a guy standing right in front of me. I smiled, showed him the nail and said, "Just saved another $5."

He pointed his pistol at me, then said through a ski mask, "Give me your money."

The only thing I could think to say was, "Man, I'm sorry. I don't have any money on me. But we work for that church over there, and if you'll come with us to the church, we'll see if we can find something for you."

He waved his pistol at me, and shouted something about giving him the money or he would shoot.

I told him I didn't have any money, but if he'd just follow us maybe we could find some for him. Then Linda, in an irritated tone of voice, said, "We're going to visit a woman whose mother just passed away." And we both turned and went down the narrow path between the backyard fences and the day-care playground fence. I waved for him to follow us and said, "Come on." Half-way down the path I turned to see if he was following, but he was just standing there in the alley looking at us. When we got to the back entrance to the church, which is also Joan's backyard, Linda went up the stairs that lead to the upper church door, and I knocked on Joan's back door. When she opened it, I turned and saw [the man] running back across Van Buren heading north.

Almost everyone we have told about the incident has been horrified at how we responded and has given us advice on how to be "better victims." I will admit that although at the moment I was not aware of any fear or panic, I did think when I turned and walked away that I was about to get shot in the back.

Looking back on it, we realize that a couple of things have changed for us in a negative sense. One thing is that we have gotten much more careful when we are out, looking both ways when we leave the house or get out of the car. And we are now sure that we want to keep the car here in a city with great public transportation. Speaking of which, we will probably use the El a little less, especially if we have to wait for a train after dark or get off at a deserted station. That makes me angry as well. *Lynn Miller, Mennonite Voluntary Service worker*

Oita, Japan—The Oita Mennonite Church members have been focusing on special meetings during the last several weeks, both for our congregation and for churches city-wide. After spending a Saturday and Sunday hearing a pastor from Tokyo recount his family's encounter with the death of their daughter, we welcomed another pastor who has become one of Japan's leading counselors.

He spoke poignantly of the need to love oneself (a definite theme around these parts) and gave anecdotes that clearly conveyed the way we human beings are and can be in our relationships with one another. Over 500 people packed the hall, and the response was so positive, regardless of religious persuasion, that Pastor Tanaka Nobuo is no doubt going to be forced to return for a follow-up presentation next year. *Bill Derksen, COM worker*

Profile

A new window on the world

A young adult learns a slower pace in Africa.

Pearl Sensenig

As Kristen Linkletter puttered through the streets of Ouagadougou on her mo-ped, known as a "mobylette" in Burkina Faso, she passed vendors hawking colorful batik fabric, an occasional turbaned nomad selling handicrafts, a goat market and a park where a dance contest was in progress.

"Canadians seem to have this image of Africans as always being hungry and needy," said the Waterloo, Ont., native. "Yet when I look around I see that although life is difficult here, people also have good times."

In fact, said Kristen, in the year she spent in this impoverished West African nation that straddles the Sahara Desert, one lesson she learned is that "you can't generalize about people."

"People in Burkina Faso think Canadians have no problems. They don't realize that some people live on the streets at home," said Kristen, 23. A member of Emmanuel United Church of Canada in Waterloo, Ont., she completed her assignment last summer.

> *"When I look around I see that although life is difficult here, people also have good times."*
>
> **Kristen Linkletter**

Kristen worked at St. Jean, a private secondary school in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's capital city. Her duties included entering data, such as student grades, on the computer, typing correspondence and teaching English at this school that has some 245 students, ages 11 to 20. Kristen was on a SALT International assignment, a one-year Mennonite Central Committee service and learning program for young adults.

Kristen lived with an African family in their compound, a situation that took some adjustment—both for her as an independent North American and for her protective, close-knit African family. "It was scary to me to move in with a family and have to depend on them for help with everything. And at first they wanted to know where I was going and when I was coming back," she said. "They were amazed that I would do things by myself. 'Aren't you afraid to be alone?' they would ask."

Throughout high school, Kristen had dreamed of living overseas and experiencing a new culture and language. Initially she imagined she might have such an experience in a European country. However, over time she decided to go to a developing country instead.

"Life is tough [there]. Although Canadians have problems, too, the problems are much different. Some women [in Burkina Faso] have to walk more than five kilometers (three miles) to fetch water for their families," she said. However, in that people-oriented society, the women often use the long walks to chat, to catch up on news about one another's lives, to sing together—and all of this is accompanied by frequent laughter.

Unemployment is high, perhaps as high as 80 percent, in a city like Ouagadougou. Landlocked Burkina Faso has few natural resources other than sun and sand.

"I realize as a university-educated Canadian I have so much freedom. Poverty takes away people's choices," Kristen said.

'You can't generalize': *Kristen Linkletter (right) chats with students at the St. Jean school.*

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

She recalled showing pictures of Canada to a friend who commented that it looked like a beautiful place he would like to visit someday. "I realized there is no way he could make enough money to get even halfway there," she said.

Kristen came to appreciate the slower pace of life in Burkina Faso. She spent some afternoons sitting with her "grandmother," who sold peanuts and chatted with passersby.

"When I first came my new friends asked me why I was walking so fast. 'You have to slow down,' they said, 'We don't walk like that here,'" she said. "I learned to saunter—I never did that in Waterloo!"

Pearl Sensenig works for MCC Communications in Akron, Pa.

Fiscal health

Let's teach our children well

Ways to pass on to our children the habits of saving and giving

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Teaching our children to save some of their money, whether from an allowance or money they earn, is a healthy discipline. Getting them to do it is often a struggle and may sometimes seem futile. As with many habits, however, savings habits instilled in us as children are more easily carried over into our adult lives, and there are big payoffs.

While I don't necessarily think it's a good idea to create large estates for young children, the fact remains that parents and other relatives are concerned about setting aside money for their children to help with college and other expenses. A quick survey around my office revealed that more than half the parents had some type of savings program for their children.

It is common that the first saving a child does is through a savings account at a local bank or credit union. Parents often put away for the child money received for birthdays and other celebrations, providing a nest egg before the child knows much about money. My first savings account was a savings program in which the bank came to my elementary school each week and picked up my savings. I was fascinated to see it grow. As a fourth grader I couldn't figure out why I got paid interest for my money.

While savings accounts are a great place to start, low interest rates usually paid on accounts like this make other investment alternatives worth pursuing as soon as possible. Children who have money set aside for college or other expenditures in the distant future should have their resources invested in a good mutual fund, preferably a good equity (stock) fund. Since the money will not be needed for many years, investment in a solid equity mutual fund will provide much better return for the child than a conservative investment in a savings account.

School tuition: An account for a minor is usually set up as a custodial account. This means that a child is named as the beneficiary, and an adult is the custodian. The custodian makes the investment decisions, but the investments belong to the child. They cannot be taken back, and they pass to the child when a specific age is reached. The custodian may spend the money for the child's benefit for such things as school tuition, but not to pay for things that are the parent's responsibility, such as a mortgage payment or the electric bill. In some states the age when the assets go to the child is 18; in others it is 21, and others allow you to choose, such as in California, where the custodian has the option of choosing any age between 18 and 25.

> ***If all we do is save or spend instead of give, then that is the lesson our children learn.***

People occasionally want to give a gift to children. This may be done by establishing a custodial account as well. Gifts of up to $10,000 may be made to another person each year without paying gift taxes. This is particularly advantageous for a grandparent whose estate may be subject to estate taxes, since this gift will reduce the taxable estate.

Income that the child earns from investments is, of course, subject to taxes, but even here it's not all bad news. In 1996 the first $650 of earnings from assets held in the child's name is tax free. The second $650 is taxed at the child's rate, most likely 15 percent. For children under age 14, any investment income over $1,300 is taxed at the parents' rate. But at an 8 percent to 10 percent return, a child would need to have a fairly large investment, in the $15,000 range, before enough income would be generated to be taxed at the parents' rate.

If a parent is attempting to teach a child about investments, mutual funds may not be the most exciting place to be. Buying individual stocks that a child can follow using the financial pages may be an option. However, since a mutual fund offers diversification that is not available by buying only one or two stocks, many people prefer mutual funds.

You do not need large sums of money to invest in mutual funds. Many funds have minimums of $500, and a few start as low as $250. Mutual funds also allow for future investments as the child receives more money.

Allocating a portion of each gift for investment is a great way to instill investment discipline in a child. Experience tells us that children at first may not be interested in investments, but as they see their resources grow they become more excited.

Investments also provide opportunities to teach our children about more than money. Investing in a socially responsible mutual fund provides an opportunity to teach our children about values we cherish. We invest in companies that produce goods and services we feel make for a better world, avoiding companies that may harm our environment or manufacture goods that harm us.

While teaching our children to save for college or other events in the future is important, the more daunting challenge is to teach our children responsibility. That includes being generous with our resources, helping the less fortunate. Here, too, it's important that we "walk the talk." If all we do is save, save, save or spend, spend, spend instead of give, give, give, then that is the lesson our children learn. If the way we teach our children to save instills a sense of hoarding and independence, then we have missed the mark.

News

Project confronts racism in Menno institutions

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A new project hopes to confront racism in the Mennonite church. The Damascus Road project, initiated by Mennonite Central Committee U.S., declares the ambitious goal of transforming today's Anabaptist institutions to permit full participation of people of diverse races and ethnic backgrounds.

The project grew from a call by a multiethnic group of Anabaptists who met in Chicago in March 1995. The group, dedicated to dismantling racism in the church, envisioned a training to address institutional racism.

The undertaking will bring leaders of nine Mennonite and Brethren in Christ organizations together twice for a total of seven days this spring. Onsite orientations will take place at each institution prior to the gatherings. Participating organizations include offices of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Eastern Mennonite University, Fairhaven Mennonite Church of Fort Wayne, Ind., Goshen (Ind.) College, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions, MCC U.S., MCC and the Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"The training process is designed to equip participants with the theological, educational and organizational skills needed to begin the process of tearing down barriers in their own institutions," says Regina Shands Stoltzfus, MCC U.S. staff associate for urban peacemaking and co-coordinator of the Damascus Road.

"The Damascus Road process will involve the movement of God's Spirit, new sight and institutional transformation," says Jody Miller Shearer, MCC U.S. staff associate for racism awareness and the event's other co-coordinator.

Crossroads, an interfaith ministry for racial justice, based in Chicago, will conduct the Damascus Road training. The group recently led a workshop at Goshen College. It has provided similar training to 12 Lutheran synods, the National Capital Presbytery, the Minnesota Council of Churches and Reba Place, a congregation in Illinois.

"Prayer will be central to the preparation for and implementation of the Damascus Road," says Shands Stoltzfus. "We invite others not able to participate in this training to support the process with their prayers."

While this spring's enrollment in Damascus Road is full, Shands Stoltzfus says organizers hope to repeat the event for other institutions and congregations. For more information contact the Racism Awareness Project at MCC U.S., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

> **"The Damascus Road process will involve the movement of God's Spirit, new sight and institutional transformation."**
>
> ***Jody Miller Shearer***

Goshen churches house homeless

Newton, Kan.—Homeless newcomers to Goshen, Ind., are finding shelter in local churches. Mennonite and other churches joined forces in November 1995 to respond to an increasing need in their community.

The Interfaith Hospitality Network took in its first homeless family Nov. 15. Through the network, homeless families are provided shelter in local churches, meals and help finding work and more permanent housing.

The network is one of 39 such networks in the United States. Jeff Gaustad, a Lutheran minister who had been a part of such networks in Kentucky and Ohio, helped get the Goshen project going. Through the network, participating churches each take a week's turn opening their church to people who need shelter. Volunteers from the church spend the night in the church with the homeless families and provide them with a

Inside the news

CPTer reflects on two-day imprisonment in West Bank / p. 14

Youth minister shares advice / p. 15

Aid to Christian Teaching weekend boosts Sunday school teachers / p. 17

Information about General Conference Mennonite Church programs is now available on the World Wide Web. The home page can be accessed at http://www2.southwind.net:80/~gcmc.

* * *

Members of Christian Peacemaker Teams joined 40 Chicago citizens on Jan. 16 to protest economic sanctions against Iraq. The group attempted to send a package of food to Iraq. The package was rejected. Current U.S. law requires that anyone wishing to ship material aid to Iraq first seek permission from the U.S. Treasury department. The Treasury has consistently denied such requests. Meanwhile, as many as 576,000 children have died as a result of the sanctions imposed against Iraq by the United Nations Security Council, according to a report by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. The protest marked the launch of a campaign, "Voices in the Wilderness," which plans to collect medical relief supplies until Feb. 27. The campaign will then transport the supplies through U.S. customs and U.N. checkpoints and into Iraq. On Jan. 16 the group also delivered a letter to the U.S. Attorney indicating their intent to collect the supplies and break the sanctions, regardless of penalty. The U.S. Department of the Treasury in a letter received Jan. 22 warned the protesters that they would face possible penalties of 12 years in jail or a $1 million fine if they proceed. For information on how to support the protest, call CPT at (312) 455-1199.

Bluffton (Ohio) College and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., are completing a faculty swap. William J. Hawk, former Bluffton administrator, has been named vice president and academic dean at EMU, beginning July 1. Hawk will fill the position left open by Lee F. Snyder, who left EMU to become Bluffton's president (see *The Mennonite*, Dec. 12, 1995).

• • •

Choice Books is considering restructuring into a cooperative, an unincorporated association/federation, or a nonprofit corporation. The 34-year-old organization places inspirational books in secular stores. Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church has served as Choice Books' umbrella organization since 1965. Book sales grew by about 11 percent in 1995, to more than 1.6 million books sold. Growth is attributed largely to increased sales through chain stores.

• • •

The New Dawn Development Center, Hualien, Taiwan, dedicated a new facility Dec. 30, 1995. The center, which cares for mentally challenged children, is a program of the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan. The new addition has allowed the center to double the number of clients, from 75 to 150. It hopes to double that number when more staff can be found. Improvements include more classroom space, a large swimming pool, nurse's office and eight rooms devoted to music or physical therapy. Housing for the clients is also being offered for the first time. The guest of honor at the dedication was Otto Dirks, pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Dirks and his late wife, Elaine, started the New Dawn program for mentally challenged children in the late 1970s while serving in Hualien with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The couple started the center with an enrollment of five children, including two of their own.

morning and evening meal.

The program takes in families in need of temporary housing who are looking for work. It meets a critical need in the Goshen area, where jobs are plentiful and housing scarce. A day center, staffed by program director and former Mennonite minister Marsha Holsopple, provides people with showers, laundry facilities and counseling related to school, housing, child care, work and other transitional needs.

Team effort: The Goshen community has rallied to support the new effort. Local service agencies and schools have sent referrals. The Window, a local soup kitchen, has served people. La Casa, a housing rehabilitation project, has helped with locating transitional housing and with odd repairs. "We're all kind of in this together out here," says La Casa staffperson Dale Klassen.

As of mid-January, the network had sheltered seven families. Of these, three had moved into a house within two weeks time. Another family left the area, and one family was asked to leave after failing to pursue work opportunities.

Holsopple sees benefits in working with local churches. Because of church members' willingness to share their time and their facilities, the program can accomplish much on a small budget.

And the project benefits the churches as well. Myron Schrag, pastor at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, sees the project as a way to become involved in the needs of the community. He credits the church's participation in the Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) program for sparking interest in the project. "Through LIFE we were starting to look at ways to be of service to the community," he says.

Wayne Steffen, a member of the Eighth Street church, sees the church as able to do what another agency can't. "The church is important because it gets away from this public agency image that's large and impersonal," he says.

Mennonite churches participating in the network as of mid-January included Waterford Mennonite Church, Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Communion Fellowship, Walnut Hill Mennonite Church and North Goshen Mennonite Church.
Larry Penner

PEACEMAKER'S JOURNAL

48 hours in an Israeli jail

Editor's note: *Israeli police released Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) member Art Gish of Athens, Ohio, in Hebron, West Bank, Jan. 10 after 48 hours imprisonment. Gish was held under charges of "doing damage to a gate under serious circumstances" and interfering with military personnel in carrying out their duties. He was released unharmed and without condition. Hisham Naji Al Batach, a Palestinian youth who was arrested with Gish, was released a few hours later.*

Israeli Defense Forces had arrested Hisham and Gish after they and others dismantled gates and turnstiles in Hebron's central marketplace. The gates, originally installed by the Israeli occupation as security measures, had not been used in the past year. They were removed with the help of hundreds of Palestinian residents, who saw the gates as an impediment to traffic and a reminder of the Israeli occupation.

Gish is an author and vegetable farmer from Athens, Ohio. He has traveled widely as a speaker in Church of the Brethren and Mennonite circles. He has been in Hebron with CPT since Dec. 10, 1995.

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—On Jan. 8 a large number of Palestinians removed gates that had been installed in Hebron's central market by the Israeli military. The gates were a constant frustration because they greatly hindered movement and symbolized the restrictions of Israeli occupation. Members of Christian Peacemaker Teams became involved in the action primarily to be a nonviolent presence in case of intervention by Israeli soldiers. Soldiers detained three Palestinians and CPT members Cole Hull, Cliff Kindy and myself. I was arrested and held 48 hours.

The police didn't know quite what to do with me. I obviously wasn't a threat, but the military wanted to bring serious charges against me, seeking at least deportation. The police even had a difficult time interrogating me. I was too interesting, and we had too much fun. I kept asking for pizza and joking about life in Israeli jails. I told them my name was Samson and that I tore down those gates all by myself. They loved it. We did a lot of laughing together.

One of the first things I did was to destroy some prison property, pornographic pictures pasted on the wall. The next morning I told the officer that I wanted to confess to another crime. I told him what I did. He said if the women were pretty, it was a crime. I told him they were very pretty. He laughed and said I would be charged with another crime.

Every time I get arrested I try to break down any barriers between the police and myself. I joke. I engage them in serious conversation; I ask about their lives. I want to make peace with everyone and believe it can be done in the middle of direct action and public witness.

One of their first questions was whether I was Amish. Many Israelis have seen the movie *Witness* and recognize my Amish-like beard. That resulted in a discussion of the Amish and the Brethren. They said I was the first Amish terrorist they had ever arrested.

We got into a big discussion of capital punishment and how peace could happen between Israelis and Palestinians. I outlined the role of Christian Peacemaker Teams as a positive, nonviolent presence and described how we have been working to reduce the tensions in Hebron. They argued that only the government has the authority to be a peacemaker.

I refused to answer any questions that would implicate others or myself, but I did make a statement about removing the gates. I said it was an act of empowerment for the Palestinians and a step toward democracy and responsibility and that I hoped Israelis would see this event as a stepping stone toward more freedom and reconciliation.

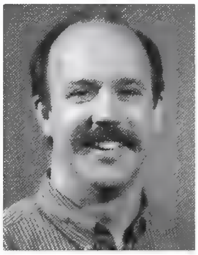
It seemed difficult for them, but they told me they would be seeking deportation and that I would be held in jail. Soon I was alone in the cell where I would spend the next two days. I accepted this as a time of spiritual retreat and went on a complete fast. I spent time singing and praying. And I caught up on sleep.

I thought a lot about my cell. It was built by the British to maintain control over the people here. Then the Jordanians took it over, and now the Israelis. How many people over the years have been in this cell because they dared to question the unjust order imposed on them? When the Palestinians take over this building in March, will they also imprison people who question their authority? I also thought of the Jews in exile in Babylon, the early Christians, the Anabaptists, the vast numbers of people who over the centuries have had the courage to stand for truth. I was at peace. *Art Gish*

Youth minister shares tips for youth groups

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—As a student at a large, suburban high school near Chicago in the early 1970s, Mike Bogard never considered running for class president.

"I started my freshman year with a height of 4 feet, 11 inches and a weight of only 90 pounds. I knew I wouldn't stand a chance because I was your typical nerd. You had to come with something pretty special to be recognized," he says.


Bogard

Thankfully, Bogard "wasn't really bothered" by the competitive atmosphere because he found support at the Cumberland Baptist Church in Mount Prospect, Ill., where his family attended.

"My youth group honored and affirmed me in ways the high school setting never did. It was my sanctuary," he says. He was elected president of the church youth group in his senior year.

It's been almost 23 years since Bogard graduated from Elk Grove High School, but he hasn't forgotten the positive impact of church during his teenage years.

In fact, for over 14 years now, Bogard has been working to ensure that other youth will have a similar experience to his own. Currently he is the youth minister for the Western District Conference.

His most recent effort resulted in the publication of *41 Ways to Build a Better Youth Group*, a book he hopes will serve as a guide for youth leaders as they try to sort out their many roles

A new program in Wichita, Kan., will provide transitional housing for survivors of domestic abuse. New Hope of Wichita, Inc., has been formed by the Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wichita and Mennonite Housing. The two Catholic orders have provided the initial capital investment and ongoing services. Mennonite Housing will furnish office space for New Hope and locate and rehabilitate housing opportunities. "Shelters and safe houses save lives by offering an immediate refuge," says Sr. Therese Wetta of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ. "New Hope Inc. will provide low-cost housing and additional support services like counseling, parenting support and job skill training for the year or more a woman needs after leaving the shelter." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

The Brazilian Mennonite Church has printed a Portuguese edition children's Bible. Over 30 percent of the 10,000 copies were presold before the product arrived in Brazil Jan. 5. "The reception so far has been fantastic—even secular bookstores are buying the Bibles," says David Falk, publishing director for the Portuguese-speaking Brazilian Mennonite Church. He serves in Brazil with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. He wanted the project to be a commercial success, especially in light of the shrinking budgets of North American mission boards. By publishing a mix of books—some suited to a general market and some tailored for Anabaptist churches—he hopes to end up in the black. Falk predicts a profit of $50,000 U.S. from the Bibles. "That amount of money dwarfs our current subsidy [from the North American mission boards] and opens up a whole new vision of how Anabaptist publishing may be done in Brazil," he says.

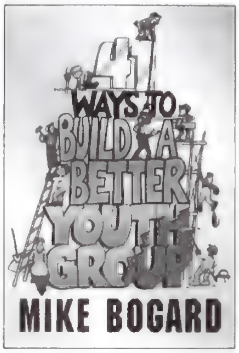
In December 1995, *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* moved the hand on its atomic clock forward to 14 minutes before midnight, symbolizing the growing potential of nuclear catastrophe. Four years ago, at the end of the Cold War, the magazine set the clock back to 17 minutes before midnight. Since then, no new arms-reduction treaties are in the works, and implementation of START II and the future of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty are in doubt. "The growing gap between rich and poor is fueling desperation and conflict," write the *Bulletin* editors. "The worldwide arms trade continues to boom, and many of the world's nations—including the United States—continue to divert huge amounts of intellectual and monetary capital into military enterprises and useless military hardware." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Utah was scheduled to execute a child murderer by firing squad Jan. 26, the first such execution in almost two decades. When word of the firing squad got out, Jack Ford's telephone rang off the hook with volunteers for the squad. The state corrections department spokesperson said he finally had to print up a form letter saying, "We are not taking volunteers." Gary Gilmore was the last man to be executed by firing squad in the United States. He was killed in 1977. In January a firing squad of state law-enforcement officers was to kill John Albert Taylor, 36, for the sexual assault and strangulation of Charla Nicola King, 11, in 1989. Like Gilmore, Taylor chose a firing squad over lethal injection. Taylor was to be baptized a Roman Catholic in January. Relatively rare during the 1980s, executions jumped to 56 last year, nearly double the 31 recorded in 1994. "Our prediction is that we are going to climb to 100 executions this year," says Steve Hawkins, executive director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. A recorded 3,046 people in 38 states await execution. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

and responsibilities. The 180-page book was published by Faith & Life Press in early January.

While the number of youth ministry resources has "mushroomed" in the last 10 years, says Bogard, many of them do not speak to the needs of Mennonite churches.



New book

The resources often assume that a majority of the congregations have a salaried staff person devoted to youth ministry, which is a far cry from the reality within the Mennonite church, he says. In the Western District Conference, fewer than 10 of the 78 churches have salaried youth ministry staff, and out of those 10 staff, only one is paid for full-time ministry to high school students.

Bogard's book recognizes the fact that many Mennonite youth sponsors volunteer their time. "I assume they do not have a lot of time. I try to send a message that it is the little things that are important," he says.

Tips: One of the basic things that youth sponsors can do is create an atmosphere of acceptance. "The Christian community must be a place where all kinds of people are welcomed regardless of who they are, where they come from or what they look like. The youth group, if it is to be a Christian youth group, can be no exception," Bogard writes in *41 Ways to Build a Better Youth Group.*

At the same time, he says, youth leaders need to clearly state Christian and Anabaptist beliefs. "Youth appreciate a straightforward approach," he says. "It is confusing to youth if they see the church accepting everything. It makes them wonder, What does Christianity mean?"

A number of youth ministry resources encourage youth sponsors to spend big bucks. That doesn't have to be the norm, says Bogard. For exam-

Tips from a youth sponsor

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Some adults may have second thoughts about leading a group of teenagers. Not Teresa Schrag.

For the last 10 years or so, Schrag has been the youth sponsor at the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

It's a job she volunteered for as soon as her children were in high school. Her husband, Larry, helps her lead activities. They live on a farm in rural Inman.

"It hasn't been a chore. I love this age group," she says. "I like their energy, their willingness to learn from others and their upbeat, unpredictable nature."

It is these kind of qualities that help her keep a youthful approach to life. "I'm not ready to get old," she says with a laugh.

Tips: One piece of advice Schrag would pass on to other sponsors is to involve youth in decision making. "You have to be willing to listen to the kids' ideas as well as be willing to try them," she says.

The Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church formed a youth council this year in order to give the teenagers more input. Other youth activities at the church range from Sunday school to mentoring to the youth group. The youth group tries to meet once a month for social events.

A midweek program that focuses on current issues has also been popular. The church usually hires a student from Hesston (Kan.) College to lead this program. "I think it is important that someone from outside the community is in charge. The youth see this as a safe place for them to come and talk," says Schrag.

She has also learned that service projects can help break down barriers within a youth group. "Kids can, at times, be exclusive in their attitudes," she says. "When they scrub showers together, it helps create a feeling of closeness that has a lasting effect."

"If we don't reach these young people, I'm not sure what would happen to the church," says Schrag. "We have to show them that someone loves them." *Carla Reimer* ple, in *41 Ways to Build a Better Youth Group*, he suggests that youth can be trained for leadership within the context of the youth group instead of sending them to an expensive leadership seminar.

"Youth need to focus on their relationship with God, the community of faith and the world. In some Mennonite churches, Sunday school is totally focused on learning about God, while the youth group is primarily a social experience," he says. "We need to push churches to offer a balance in every setting."

Dangerous world: Bogard thinks that "the world teenagers are living in today is more dangerous. In the past, youth sponsors haven't dealt with abuse, violence, drugs and alcohol to the same degree. Youth sponsors no longer can expect to just have a devotional time when one of the youth group members has been beaten up by her boyfriend over the weekend."

He places much of the blame for the rise in adolescent problems on adults. "Young people reflect the world they are living in; they don't create it. Youth are users of what society makes available to them," he says.

At a Mennonite retreat for senior high school students, camp leaders were surprised to learn how many of the teenagers were dealing with serious disruptions in their families. "They were facing issues such as loss of their parents due to separation, divorce or death," Bogard says.

The hectic pace of life is another issue that youth leaders have to be prepared for. Multiple activities and organizations demand their time. "Parents and youth sponsors need to help youth prioritize and then be supportive of their decisions," he says.

It can be discouraging when youth opt to work to earn spending money and therefore no longer have time for the church youth group, Bogard admits. Sometimes the parents also pressure their children to participate in activities that conflict with church life.

The church isn't in a position to compete with what the secular world has to offer. Hopefully the youth leaders can work with the parents to encourage them to help their teenagers make the right decisions, says Bogard.

"The church should be a worshiping community of believers engaged in mission. The youth group can be an important setting where young people experience what it means to be that kind of church," he says. "It can empower youth to live out their faith in the world."

His book, *41 Ways to Build A Better Youth Group*, is available from Faith & Life Press. *Carla Reimer*

ACT weekend renews Sunday school teachers

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Nadine Busenitz of Busby, Mont., came away from the Aid to Christian Teaching (ACT) weekend in Canton, Iowa, Nov. 17-19, 1995, renewed as an educator.

She wasn't disappointed. "I came back with new enthusiasm for Sunday school teaching. I discovered many new ideas, ways I can be more creative in the classroom," says Busenitz, who teaches at the White River Cheyenne Church in Busby.

A total of 90 educators from Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Manitoba participated in the ACT weekend, planned by the Northern District Conference, the Iowa-Nebraska Conference and the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

For Busenitz and others who attended, simply being around other teachers was a source of support. "It was an encouragement to know I wasn't the only one who struggled with the feeling that Sunday school could seem like the same old thing," says Busenitz.

She also learned more about faith development. It's something that has been on her mind lately due to her conversations with a young woman who has questions about her faith.

"Before the ACT weekend, I might have wondered, Is she throwing everything out? Now I realize that when a person begins to ask questions, it doesn't mean they are throwing their faith overboard. It's a process of making their beliefs their own," says Busenitz.

Upcoming ACT weekends are scheduled in Rosemary, Alta., March 1-3, and Souderton, Pa., Oct. 11-13. For more information about ACT weekends contact Ken Hawkley, 8274 Waco Lane, Powell, OH, (614) 766-0976, e-mail: 102132.2170@CompuServe.com. *Carla Reimer*

Mennonite Central Committee Canada hopes to excite young adults about MCC through a cross-Canada concert tour being sponsored by MCCC's Peace and Social Concerns. The "Take Back the Trees" tour features Winnipeg musician Rick Unruh. The tour starts in Winnipeg on Feb. 24, then goes to Abbotsford, B.C., March 8; Saskatoon, March 16; Waterloo, Ont., March 30, and Halifax, N.S., April 13. Local bands will also be part of the lineup at each location. Money raised through ticket sales will be used for MCC reforestation efforts in Cambodia.

• • •

Politically correct labels for races may not be the most correct, says the *Wall Street Journal*. A U.S. Labor Department survey of 60,000 households reports that among black people, 44 percent want to be called black, while 28 percent prefer African-American. Nearly half of American Indians prefered the designation American Indian, while 37 percent prefer Native American. Among Hispanic people, the majority prefer Hispanic instead of Latino or "of Spanish origin." An overwhelming majority of white people prefer the term white, but about 3 percent prefer "European American." (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

Six members of Christian Peacemaker Teams were arrested for trespassing Jan. 15 during a protest against Project ELF in Wisconsin. CPTers and local citizens protested at the ELF site as part of Martin Luther King Jr. holiday celebrations. Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) transmitters send commands to submerged nuclear-armed submarines around the globe as a part of the U.S. Navy's first-strike system. The protest was part of an ongoing effort by local citizens to close the site. Twice in 1995 the U.S. Senate voted to discontinue funding, only to have it reinstated in committee after lobbying from members of Congress who have ties to the submarine industry. Arrestees were given a forfeiture, the equivalent of a $175 parking ticket.

A CALL FOR CITIZEN-DELEGATES TO

The Second Luddite Congress

A "First Congress" was held 184 years ago in the place where the Machine Age was just beginning...

The folk of central England had risen to fight against the Industrial Revolution.

Automation had stolen their livelihoods. The newly invented 'factory system' took their dignity. The simpler, pastoral way of life they loved was swept away by government and business lust for global markets.

Those who resisted the destruction of their communities were dubbed 'Luddites' after the mythical leader of their leaderless movement, General Ned Ludd.

They broke the hated machines and burned the factories to the ground. For a brief moment, it seemed they might stop the Machine Age in its tracks.

On April 15, 1812, as British troops descended on the Heartland of their own country, the Luddites met to discuss tactics and organize a "Second Congress."

They chose violent resistance — and in six months' time the soldiers and factory owners had wiped the Luddite movement from the face of the earth.

The Second Congress was never held.

184 years later, we are entering the computerized, genetically altered world of the global economy...

Many of us are awakening to the ecological, cultural, and spiritual destruction the continuing Industrial Revolution has brought to the world.

We reject its promise of unlimited consumption. We know its exploitation of people, places and things is leading to worldwide ecological and societal collapse.

But, unlike those early Luddites, we survivors of this, the bloodiest century in human history, also know violence is not the solution.

There must, instead, be a worldwide change of heart, a leaderless movement of passive resistance to consumerism and the technologies of the 'new' Industrial Revolution of the Computer Age.

A revolution of hearts, in which the means justify the ends, instead of the other way around.

What a tall order!

We couldn't pretend to be able to accomplish it alone. Please come and help us find the answers to the question of what is to be done:

The Second Luddite Congress

A REVOLUTION OF HEARTS

APRIL 13,14 & 15, 1996

AT HISTORIC STILLWATER FRIENDS MEETINGHOUSE
BARNESVILLE, OHIO

Participants include:
Historian **Kirkpatrick Sale** (*Human Scale; Rebels Against the Future*)
Un-Schooler **John Taylor Gatto** (*Dumbing Us Down*)
Technology critic **Jerry Mander** (*Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*)
Christian communitarian **Arthur Gish** (*Beyond the Rat Race*)
Farmer and writer **Gene Logsdon** (*The Contrary Farmer; At Nature's Pace*)
And many others!

For registration and other information, please call the Holmes County, Ohio Message Center at

1-800-893-3702

Extension 5833

Sponsored by the Center for Plain Living and Plain Magazine, a forum of Amish, Quaker, Mennonite, Brethren and other nonconforming viewpoints.
With support from the Foundation for Deep Ecology.

Record

DEATHS

John F. Sprunger died unexpectedly Jan. 11. He had served as pastor at First Church, Berne, Ind. (1952-54), East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa. (1954-1963), Church of the Good Samaritans, Holland, Pa. (1963-1975), Indian Valley Church, Harleysville, Pa. (1975-1982) and Herold Church, Cordell, Okla. (1983-1994).

MINISTERS

Walt Friesen is serving as interim pastor at Goessel (Kan.) Church.

Don Roberts is serving as supply pastor at Herold Church, Cordell, Okla.

Seitz

Kenneth L. Seitz was installed as pastor at First Church, Reedley, Calif., Jan. 7.

Thinagar Sitther was licensed as pastor at Bethel Church, Hammon, Okla., Dec. 3, 1995.

John Voth, Eden Church, Inola, Okla., and family are in Cachipay, Colombia, on a four-month sabbatical, working at the retreat center there.

WORKERS

Carmen and **Vincent Chen**, Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church, Buenos Aires, are mission associates with COM. Vincent works with Gospel Operation International, ministering to Chinese Christians in Argentina.

John Hildebrand, Crystal City, Man., is development director at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man.

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MBM—Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church

Ben and **Patty Wiebe**, Hamilton, Ont., are on a three-month COM/MBM term at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India. Ben is teaching Bible and theology courses, and Patty is counseling and tutoring.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **physician** to provide medical expertise in the development and administration of insurance products. This half-time position, at MMA's headquarters in Goshen, Ind., includes helping to make underwriting decisions and determining the medical necessity of services, supplies and treatment. This individual will also serve as the chief spokesperson for MMA on medical matters. The candidate must have a current state medical license and at least three years of experience in a specialty.

As a church-affiliated insurance and financial services organization, MMA serves people all over the United States who are associated with churches that have roots in the Anabaptist tradition. MMA offers excellent working conditions and benefits.

For further information, call **Jerry Troyer at 1-800-348-7468** or write **P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.**

The **Conference of Mennonites in Alberta** invites applications for the position of **camp manager** at Camp Valaqua. Responsibilities include administration and maintenance of the camp facility. Remuneration to include a monthly salary of $1,000, some benefits and housing. Position available May 1.

For further details, or to apply, contact **David Martins, Chair of Camp Committee, 2509 - 15 Ave. N., Lethbridge, AB T1K 4E1; (403) 327-0541.** Please submit applications **by Feb. 29.**

Goshen College announces a full-time tenure-track position **teaching marketing-related and other general business courses** and providing leadership for the marketing concentration offered in the department's business major. Qualifications include master's degree (doctorate preferred), effectiveness as a teacher and experience or work in the field of marketing. Appointment begins Aug. 15. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Applications will be received until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send resume and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Eastern Mennonite University announces an opening faculty position in **biology**. One year replacement beginning Fall 1996. Ph.D. preferred. Must be committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Teaching in mammalian physiology, comparative or gross anatomy, and developmental biology with team-teaching in physiological psychology and general biology courses. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume by **Feb. 29, 1996**, to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.** EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Camp Friedenswald announces an opening for **executive director**. The camp is seeking someone with a dynamic Anabaptist/Christian faith who has a vision for camping and retreat ministries. The executive director will be expected to shape an organizational culture around the core values of service, innovation, trust, compassion, stewardship, learning, action, and mutual support and accountability. The executive director is responsible for articulating the mission of the camp and maintaining its spiritual foundation. Other responsibilities include recruiting and supervising staff and developing a strategic plan, budgets and plans for marketing and development. New facilities promise to bring enhanced vitality and exciting opportunities to the camp. Deadline for resumes is **March 15, 1996.**

Send resumes and inquiries to:
Search Committee, Attn: Beth Cender, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031.

Moving?
Let us know.
Call (316) 283-5100.

Development director opening at **Belleville Mennonite School**, preschool through grade 12, located in central Pennsylvania. Seeking someone who is outgoing, likes working with people and is excited about Christian education. Responsible for fund-raising and development program. Bachelor's degree preferred, full-time position beginning in July.

For more information, call **Matt McMullen at (717) 935-2184.**

Goshen College announces a non-tenured position (at least half-time) teaching **English as a Second Language (ESL)**, beginning in August. Responsibilities include directing and teaching in a new intensive ESL program for international students with 500-550 scores on the TOEFL test. Qualifications include master's degree in ESL or applied linguistics, with ESL experience in the United States or abroad preferred. The half-time assignment will include fall semester courses in listening/speaking, reading/writing and U.S. culture, and a spring course in composition. Additional load possible teaching general education courses in English composition. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Applications will be received until the position is filled. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send resume and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Are your retirement investments rooted in your values?

Roots are unseen, but they find their expression in the light of day.

Same with living your beliefs, such as investing your hard-earned retirement money according to your values.

That's the reason for MMA Praxis Mutual Funds. With MMA Praxis, you can get an IRA that invests in enterprises that enhance peace, justice, and the quality of human life. An IRA that can really express your values.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

MMA

Let All Within Us Praise!
A Symposium on Worship

Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
May 2-4, 1996

Join us for this examination of the problems and possibilities of effective worship and worship planning through workshops and worship experiences for pastors, youth workers, musicians and worship planners.

Resource persons include:
Paul Westermeyer
Abe Bergen
John Esau
Dorothy Nickel Friesen
Ron Guengerich
Keith Harder
Steve Jacoby
Marlene Kropf
Kenneth Nafziger
John Rempel
Patricia Shelly

Registration fee: $30

For more information contact Bethel College at 316-284-5281 or Dale Schrag at *drs@bethelks.edu.*

This symposium has been initiated and funded by the Fransen Family Mennonite Foundation, in cooperation with Bethel College, Faith & Life Press, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, South Central Conference and Western District Conference.

BETHEL
COLLEGE

300 East 27th Street • North Newton, KS 67117

Reviews

MUSIC

GOSPEL MEETS BLUES

As I Am *by Chuck Neufeld (MVS recordings, 1995)*

Reviewed by Ben Chappell, Bluffton, Ohio

huck eufeld

Someone once said that the difference between the blues and gospel is that in gospel you sing "Jesus" and in the blues you sing "baby." The distinction could also be drawn this way: The blues is about how things are, while gospel focuses on lessons of how things should be.

On *As I Am*, Chuck Neufeld has a foot in both streams and lets the listener know that the "are" and the "should be" don't always match. He delivers snapshots of the world's shortcomings as he sees them.

Though the new album is more personal than Neufeld's last effort, *Part of Me Wishes, Part of Me Knows*, with fewer scriptural allusions, the religious element is still present. In the musical sermon "Many of you" and in "Everybody," a ballad of human resilience, Neufeld makes it clear that, like the gospel song goes, he's come to lift us up.

The production on *As I Am* is the best I've heard on a Neufeld recording, not so much because of the digital equipment used but thanks to a sensitive, even mix. The musicians can take partial credit: Drummer Michael Reece contributes to the balanced sound with his steady, unobtrusive backup, as does Dean Clemmer, whose lush pedal steel adds depth to the country-flavored "Hurry Slowly" and "Years of Tears." But a new home studio, donated to him by the late radical Jerry Keiper, has also allowed Neufeld to develop this album gradually, and the time spent on it has paid off.

An additional collaborator on the album is Chuck's son Jon Neufeld, an accomplished guitarist. The younger Neufeld gives "I'd Like to Know" a decidedly '60s feel with his added riffs, lends an almost Beatles-like tint to "Everybody" and adds to the drama of "Nothing I Want," which, loaded with quick scalework, harmonic contrasts and a drop-D tuning of the guitars, borders on the theatrical.

While the new songs are undeniably Neufeld, almost more so are the reworkings of old material. Especially on the 19th-century hymn "Just As I Am," Neufeld demonstrates his talent at making songs his own. Likewise, his interpretation of a traditional melody on "Years of Tears" lends integrity to his original lyric, allowing it to bring headlines of the war in Bosnia down to earth. He takes on these readings with the care of a folksinger. His innovations are subtle, and when a sparse arrangement forces Neufeld's voice and guitar to hold their own—as on "Lone Pilgrim," credited to songwriters B. F. While and Adger M. Pace—it works.

Wailing true stories of tribulation like a blues singer and offering praises like a church choir, Neufeld makes *As I Am* a consistent, solid piece of work. His dedicated listeners will not be disappointed.

FILMS

MUSIC AND YOUNG LIVES

Mr. Holland's Opus *written by Patrick Sheane Duncan, produced by Ted Field and Michael Nolin, directed by Stephen Herek*

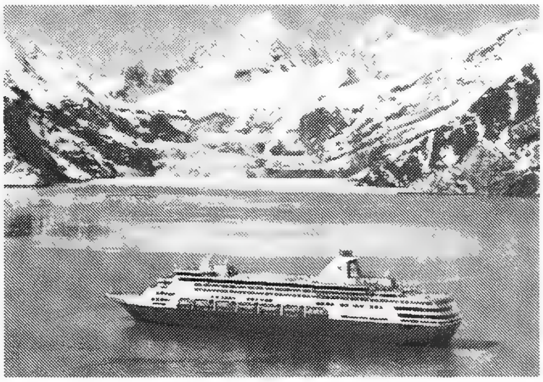
Reviewed by Melanie Mueller, Newton, Kan.

Who was your favorite teacher? Why? Often we find that the teachers who had the most impact on our lives weren't the ones who imparted the most knowledge or the ones from whom we received the best grades but the ones who gave us their time and interest.

Mr. Holland's Opus is the story of one such teacher. The movie opens a year after U.S. President John F. Kennedy's assassination. Glen Holland is a musician and aspiring composer. What he wants most is to be able to write music. He takes a teaching job at a high school to earn enough money so that in a few years he can devote his time solely to composing. His music appreciation class is full of uninterested students, his band and orchestra of lackluster musicians. He eagerly awaits the bell at the end of each day so he can return home to his real vocation, composing.

One day Mr. Holland stops the band

TOURMAGINATION
offers New Tour...



ALASKA '96

Enjoy majestic beauty: shimmering glaciers, deep fjords, soaring eagles, thundering caribou, 1,000-mile cruise and much more with Mennonite friends from all over North America.

Call Today
1-800-565-0451
(US & Canada) for a brochure

Ask about our other tours: Mexico, Jamaica, Australia/New Zealand, Vienna, Europe

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg.# 1567624

1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-020
[illegible]
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Life in the fast(ing) lane

Lent calls us to place ourselves with Jesus in the Judean wilderness. According to the Gospels, he went there (or was driven there by the Spirit, says Mark) after his baptism. There he fasted 40 days and nights.

Lent is the 40-day period (excluding Sundays, which are feast days) from Ash Wednesday (Feb. 21 this year) to Easter (April 7 this year). It imitates the 40-day fast of Jesus (Mark 1:13) as well as of Moses (Exodus 24:18) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8).

Originally the church observed a strict Lenten fast, allowing only a meal toward evening, with meat and fish forbidden. Today, except for Eastern Christians, the church does not observe a fast during Lent.

Mennonites, who sooner see eating as a holy act than fasting, have not embraced Lent with much fervor. However, says pastor Mark Miller (page 9 in this issue), that may be changing. Mennonites are becoming more open to historic church traditions.

Lent is one tradition we need to embrace more fully than we have. We tend to shy away from any kind of ascetic discipline out of fear of legalism, if not out of fear of giving up a pleasure. Asceticism can be abused and misused, but in our self-serving culture, we need disciplines like fasting to clear our minds and spirits.

Slowing down our pace, taking time to reflect on our life and our death, can help sharpen our senses. Disciplines like fasting and prayer help us see things we may not otherwise.

In his book *The Silence of Angels*, Dale Allison argues that a certain amount of ascetic discipline can help free our imaginations, our perception of divine reality. His prescription has three parts: "(1) extended reflection upon transcendent realities, (2) prolonged experience of the natural world and (3) stillness without and within."

These three disciplines are diametrically opposed to our modern culture. Most of us, writes Allison, are "materialists in fact: this world is our home, and here our minds rest." We spend most of our time inside, in artificial environments, removed from Nature. And the frenetic pace of our lives and the ubiquitous noise of our technological culture moves us "away from stillness and quiet." Allison writes, "We are, while awake, soaked with a torrent of audio and visual stimuli. We no longer hear the silence of angels."

Harried pace: When Kristen Linkletter was in Burkina Faso (see her story on page 11), people asked her why she walked so fast. Kristen, infected with her culture's hurried, harried pace, learned to saunter.

In his essay "Walking," Henry David Thoreau traces the word "saunter" to "people who roved about the country in the Middle Ages and asked for charity, under pretence of going *a la Sainte Terre*, to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, 'There goes a *Sainte-Terrer*,' a Saunterer—a Holy Lander." Thoreau calls us to be saunterers who make every walk "a sort of crusade."

Slowing down our pace, taking time to reflect on our life and our death (see Ronda Suderman King's article, page 3), can help sharpen our senses. Disciplines like fasting and prayer help us see things we may not otherwise. Did Jesus' fasting allow him to see and face the temptations of the devil? Are we succumbing to temptations we don't even know about?

Take some time this Lenten season to imaginatively be with Jesus in the wilderness. Take time to fast, even a meal a week, or to pray, alone or with others, to read Scripture and to reflect on your life. Such disciplines are difficult, and they may appear scandalous to our modern culture, but the rewards are great, for they help us "know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:19).
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

$2.00

Inside

Strangers in their own land / p. 10

A call for help / p. 11

Seeking God's face in prayer / p. 12

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 04
FEBRUARY 27, 1996

MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
ELKHART
LIBRARY
FEB 28 '96

- Streams in the desert (page 3)
- From road to river spirituality (page 6)
- All shall be well (page 8)

Godward:

3 stories of grace......

Prologue

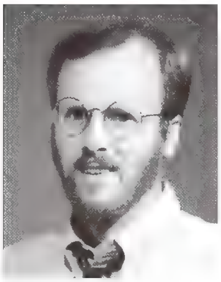
When people talk with me about writing for *The Mennonite*, I often say to them, Tell a story. Stories not only inform us but move us. We usually respond more readily to a story than to a pronouncement.

The stories in this issue tell about people's experience of God's grace in their lives. Anna Kreider Juhnke tells of her healing experience in Africa (page 3). Erland Waltner tells of learning about a "spirituality of subtraction" (page 6). And Marlene Kropf tells of living in a fearful situation and learning to trust that all shall be well (page 8).

These stories are from a book just out from Herald Press called *Godward: Personal Stories of Grace*, edited by Ted Koontz. Look for it at a bookstore or order from Herald Press, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683.

Two of our writers take us to Mexico. Octavio Diaz writes about the poverty in Mexico City and how his congregation is reaching out to poor people (page 10).

Erwin Boschmann alerts us to the desperate situation of German-speaking Mennonites in Mexico who also face poverty (page 11).



Marlene Kropf offers some lessons about the prayer of discernment (page 12).

As you read the stories in this issue you may want to reflect on how God has been active in your life. Then write it down or tell it to someone. *gh*

Next issue: Speaking peace in a culture at war

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

Contents

FEATURES

3 Streams in the desert

A journey of healing, from Africa to North America

5 Investment

A reflection on Matthew 25:14-27 and Mark 6:30-44

6 From road to river spirituality

Lessons on letting go and letting God

8 All shall be well

The movement from the house of fear to the house of love

DEPARTMENTS

10 Bible
11 Speaking out
12 Learning to pray
13 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Larry Penner

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail TheMennonite@gcmc.org

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Streams in the desert

A journey of healing, from Africa to North America

Anna Kreider Juhnke

Protestants don't go to the desert to find God, as the early Christian monks did. When my husband, Jim, and I signed up for service in Botswana with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in our early 30s, I was looking forward to a service adventure, something beyond the repetitive routine of housework, child care, and part-time teaching of the same few college courses. I wasn't going to this barren desert country of Africa to seek God, because neither I nor God was lost. I had lived my whole life knowing I was a child of God, trying to be obedient, flourishing in the Christian community.

> *I was the competent, highly credentialed teacher, doing all my good work in my own strength, until I was physically and spiritually worn out.*

There was a special joy for us in Botswana. Often I had an exhilarated feeling as I bicycled to school along the dusty roads of our little city before seven in the morning. I received warm greetings from the Batswana women and men on their bicycles and watched the early sun shine on the rocky hills. Even the scrub thorn bushes all around us took on a kind of beauty. I felt boundless energy for our new tasks.

And I exhausted myself. I was the competent, highly credentialed teacher, doing all my good work in my own strength, until I was physically and spiritually worn out. I caved in to some minor infection and was sick in bed for six weeks. That was the real desert. Like a lot of other sick people, I felt useless and depressed. Now that I wasn't busy, I had time to pray. But I was too dry to pray. I discovered that I didn't even know how, and that scared me.

The panic of emptiness: Even more frightening was my feeling of having no identity when I couldn't teach, work and achieve something. I tried to comfort myself by believing that my spiritual state was a result of illness. But deep inside, I suspected

> ***Because of that healing in the desert of Botswana, I knew that God's grace would see me through this new desert stage of my journey.***

that the reverse was true. In any case, the panic of emptiness drove me to seek God in that dry desert country.

As I slowly got well, I began to listen to people who talked about healing, including my charismatic friends. We also started visiting the Apostolic Spiritual Healing Church—a truly African church that believed in healing for the whole person. Whether you were sick or depressed, had lost your job or were having trouble in your marriage, they laid hands on you and prayed for healing.

But I wasn't free to ask them to lay hands on me and pray for me. These Christians danced and sang because of God's generosity, not because of their own competence or credentials. But I didn't feel free to dance with them because I was clumsy, not a good dancer. I realized that I had always managed to avoid situations where I feared I was not competent and in control—like public speaking, for another example. I had been in more of a prison than I had recognized.

But God led me patiently until, at an MCC Easter retreat that year, the cross and resurrection became real for me. The Lord invited me to die to my old self, to nail my competence and credentials on the cross and be free to live by God's grace. Suddenly, as in the old Wesley hymn, "My chains fell off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth and followed thee."

The feeling of grace and peace continued with me on the following day, when all the petrol stations were closed and we ran out of gas on the way home. While Jim hitched a ride, I sat on the dusty roadside telling stories to our two little children, my heart brimming with joy.

Life felt different. I could be spontaneous with people. I danced in church, and it was OK to be absurdly awkward. I agreed to speak to the student body in chapel, and it was OK to feel my knees knocking. Salvation was happening in that thorny, desert country, as in the words of Isaiah 35:6: "Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert."

Terrorized: Unfortunately, when I came back home to the United States, I slipped slowly back over the years into the shell of supercompetent teacher as my main identity. That put a lot of psychological pressure on me—and a lot more on my students. But somehow I didn't realize how destructive I was to my students, how terrorized some of them felt in my classes.

Finally came a semester as barren and rocky as any desert. A student friend of mine confronted me, speaking the truth in love. I was shattered. With shame I asked the campus pastor to interview some of my students and help me understand what was going wrong. It was hard to confess that teaching was the most unredeemed area of my life, that my "competence" was blocking Christ from speaking through me or using me.

Painfully I surrendered the broken pieces of my self-confidence to God, praying for just enough grace to get through each day. At times that year I thought it would be easier to quit teaching than let God mend what was broken, including my reputation, in whatever time that would take.

In fact it did take several years for the joy to come back into teaching, for me to be able to concentrate on my students instead of thinking, "Oh no, what am I doing wrong now?" But because of that healing in the desert of Botswana, I knew that God's grace would see me through this new desert stage of my journey. When the African-American students sang the gospel song, "I don't believe he brought me this far to leave me," I could feel the "amen."

Cancer: I am grateful that God gave me those experiences of spiritual brokenness and healing early enough that I didn't have to cope with them at the time both my sister and I were diagnosed with cancer. This time the prayers and love of the community provided strength I hadn't believed possible. A friend who had lived with cancer left me a note at the hospital before my kidney surgery, encouraging me to see cancer as a pilgrimage. So that night I memorized part of a pilgrimage psalm: "Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength till each appears before God in Zion" (Psalm 84:5-7 NIV).

Water in the desert ... springs and streams of it. My sister Sara's cancer quickly worsened, but with calm courage she prepared to appear before God in Zion. Both of us were held up by praying friends and by God's grace. For me it was an almost physical sense of being lifted into the stream of healing power. Despite the pain and the grief, there was a radiance and goodness surrounding this wilderness pilgrimage that stayed with me for a long time.

Ten happy years passed, including a sabbatical year of teaching in China. I thought the cancer was gone. It wasn't. At the end of 1992, it showed up again in my pancreas. A far more dangerous surgery would be necessary to try to buy another good decade by removing my pancreas and related organs.

We had a tense Christmas that year, thinking about the surgery at the end of the month at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. Two days before Jim and I left for Mayo, our pastors and close friends at Bethel College Mennonite Church came to our home. They led us in an anointing service and claimed the power of God's healing love on our behalf. It was a wonderful gift. We did feel the power of God's love filling us. We flew north in strength.

I told the surgeon that many people were praying for him. Dr. Thompson answered, "And I will be praying for you." That seemed a confirmation that I was surrounded by God's love. Dr. Thompson operated on me until 10 at night, and he must have been exhausted. But God was with him and me and with Jim and the other family members who waited and prayed at the hospital. I not only survived, but all my re-engineered digestive systems worked. It still seems a miracle.

A garden of flowers: This time the lonely pilgrimage had been the long months of testing and decisions before the surgery. But the nine months of recovery, when I was too weak to teach, were not a desert of emptiness and lost identity. My recovery was a garden of flowers, filled with the love and kindness of many Christian friends.

After a couple of months, I returned to my Thursday morning prayer group of faithful prayer veterans. They had supported me through both cancer crises, and their singing always lifts my spirit. Each season and activity as I returned to it had a new radiance. Teaching again in the fall was a special gift; each colleague and student was a gift. I felt surrounded by love.

It's not all roses. By now some of the glow has gone out of teaching again. I live with the knowledge that there is no chemotherapy or radiation that works on renal cell carcinoma as backup for my surgery. I now am diabetic, daily aware of the fragile chemistry of my body and of the mysteries of the immune system I'm depending on to suppress new cancer growth. I think often of Psalm 84. I am going "from strength to strength" now, but I'm aware of the end of the pilgrimage, "appearing before God in Zion." When I get there, I can thank God for experiences of grace in desert times, each preparing me for the next stage of the journey. Indeed, I can give thanks now.

Anna Kreider Juhnke teaches English at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. She is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton. This article is from a chapter in Godward: Personal Stories of Grace, *edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996).*

Investment

A reflection on Matthew 25:14-27 *and* Mark 6:30-44

Ruth Naylor

I don't know
how many talents
you gave, Lord,
but I know
it feels like
only one.

I always wonder
if what I am
and what I have
to offer
is enough.

The quiet fear
says it isn't.
The nagging guilt
comes not
from burying
that which was given

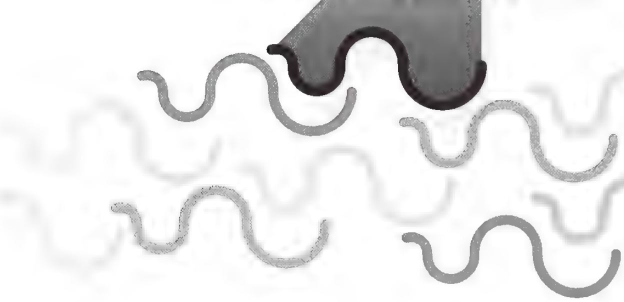
But from
whipping it into
investment
in too many places
in order to be
adequate.

When will I be able
to accept what you have given
and simply have lunch
with you
allowing you to multiply
the talents
around me
because I offered
you what I have and am?

Ruth Naylor lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

Lessons on letting go and letting God

From road to river spirituality



Erland Waltner

As I write this, I am 79, basically retired from 55 years of ministry with the General Conference Mennonite Church, gradually losing my eyesight due to macular degeneration, yet still actively involved in a part-time role at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Sixty-five years ago I first confessed my faith in Jesus Christ, was baptized into the Salem Mennonite Church at Freeman, S.D., claimed forgiveness for sins. I began reading the Bible avidly as a teenager and struggled with a sense of call from God to enter some kind of "full-time Christian service," as we called it then. I pursued what I now call a spirituality of direction or guidance. I sincerely wanted to know God's will for my life. Until then, I had been inclined to seek God primarily when I was in some kind of trouble, as when my younger brother was near death with pneumonia.

Since then I have traveled many roads serving as pastor, college Bible teacher, visiting biblical preacher, and later as seminary teacher and administrator. My activities log includes literally thousands of sermons and even more classroom hours, not to mention board and committee meetings at virtually every level of organized church life. During all these years and in all of these ministries, I have spoken often and much, with earnestness and even with passion, of God, of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

During the last decade of my life, however, I have sensed that I am again in transition in my experience of God. This has come about in part because I have been in a conscious occupational retirement process. It has also come because I have experienced in a new way how important spiritual life disciplines are for me.

Spiritual guide: Such disciplines include for me regular times and patterns of prayer, deliberate and structured meditative reading of Scripture, keeping a spiritual life journal, and sharing monthly with a person who has consented to be a spiritual guide to me.

In this transition I am aware that for many years of my Christian life and ministry, my time with God was something like a quick stop while driving hard on a long and sometimes rough road. I have compared it to a pit stop in the Indianapolis 500, where racers stop to refuel, to check tires, to watch for possible trouble ahead before hurrying back into the fast lane as quickly as possible. God has truly been gracious in keeping me from crashing, but I now also know that I missed out on much God was eager to give me even during those busy years of congregational, conference and institutional work. I was a hard driver, sometimes driving family and colleagues into undue stress. I called mine "a spirituality of the road."

I was a hard driver, sometimes driving family and colleagues into undue stress. I called mine "a spirituality of the road."

Now I am beginning to see my relationship with God as being more like a river that helps me get from here to there and actually helps carry me along from day to day, from task to task, from one experience to the next. I am experiencing God as One who is not only daily present with me but One who is in motion, bearing me up, sustaining, renewing, enabling me.

Prayer times are now not only pit stops to refuel but also times of overwhelming gratitude, of buoyant reassurance, and of growing hope as well as times of asking, seeking and knocking for myself or for others in intercession.

In retrospect, I wish I had experienced these aspects of prayer long ago. However, I now also confess that this kind of awareness of God calls for something I may not have been ready for earlier. It involves what Richard Rohr has called a "spirituality of subtraction," that is, a spirituality of "letting go and letting God."

Detachment: Much of our lives is devoted to accumulation of cognitive knowledge, of social relationships, of material holdings—but the call of God

To abound in hope, when so many around me wallow in despair, strikes me as a divine calling precisely for such an ominous time as this.

is also to the simplification of life, to letting go, to yielding up, to a detachment from what sometimes become our addictions. This the rich young ruler refused to do and thus remained very sad.

Spirituality of the river, as I now like to call it, asks for a higher kind of trusting in God than I earlier experienced when more inclined to cover all the bases to protect my interests. I used to have an inward satisfaction about trying to keep my life under control, especially my own control. I tended to rationalize that I must be a prudent provider for my family and a responsible steward of all that God and God's people had entrusted to me. I tended to push my sense of responsibility beyond appropriate boundaries.

Spirituality of the river also calls for a deeper kind of love in which I am more ready to give up more willingly and gracefully than before things that once were important to me. This includes proper recognition of things I accomplished (by God's grace, to be sure). I was vaguely annoyed by an observation I heard long ago, that "you can do a lot of good in the world if you don't mind who gets the credit for it." Now I'm beginning to grasp more deeply what it means truly to love God with my whole being, and my neighbors, including my enemies, as myself.

This spirituality also calls for a profound hope that, even while I can no longer have what I once had, what ultimately matters in life is entirely secure in and with God. To abound in hope, when so many around me wallow in despair, strikes me as a divine calling precisely for such an ominous time as this.

Learning to be carried on and by this river is no easier than learning to swim in the first place, a skill I have never really mastered. I perceive myself as still in an early stage of learning to "let go and let God."

This formula—letting go and letting God—has two parts. Both require deep faith, love and hope. It is hard and even painful to let some things go. But so is it to let God be God, truly God, in my life. That seems to confront so directly the currently popular moods of self-assertiveness and self-actualization. It surely challenges the current cult of narcissism.

To be honest, then, I must say that I have only started on this part of my spiritual journey, but I am clear in my heart that this is the way I must go. To me it is exciting and reassuring that many others have found this way—the spirituality of the river—long before I came along and will find it long after I am gone.

Meanwhile I identify with the way Susan W.N. Ruach describes this "New Way of Struggling":

"To struggle used to be
To grab with both hands
  and shake
  and twist
  and turn
  and push
  and shove and not give in
But wrest an answer from it all
As Jacob did a blessing.
But there is another way
To struggle with an issue, a question—
Simply to jump off
  into the abyss
  and find ourselves
    floating
    falling
    tumbling
    being led
  slowly and gently
  but surely
  to the answers God has for us—
  to watch the answers unfold
  before our eyes and still
  to be part of the unfolding.
But, oh! the trust necessary for this new way!
Not to be always reaching out
For the old hand-holds." (from *A Guide to Prayer* by Reuben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck [Upper Room, 1983])

Human folly: Cautious by nature and endowed with a large dose of critical reasoning, I find it hard to jump. However, I am learning that when it is truly God who says, "Jump," it is human folly not to let go. To hold on to privilege, advantage and earnings seems so safe, so just and so reasonable. But to let go yields peace and joy and wholeness beyond expectation.

Meanwhile, in the midst of a shame-troubled culture, I affirm with all my heart with the apostle Paul, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith" (Romans 1:16).

And again, "For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him" (2 Timothy 1:11-12).

This is the good news I am experiencing in new depth. Thanks be to God.

Erland Waltner, president emeritus of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has also been a pastor; a church and conference leader, including Mennonite World Conference; a college and graduate-level Bible teacher, and a seminary administrator. In active retirement he served as part-time executive for the Mennonite Medical Association while continuing also part-time as a seminary teacher. Currently he is working on a commentary of 1 Peter for the Believers Church Bible Commentary series. This article is from a chapter in Godward: Personal Stories of Grace, *edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996).*

All shall be well

The movement from the house of fear to the house of love

Marlene Kropf

Outside my classroom a gunshot exploded. "How will I protect the students?" I thought numbly. Concrete block walls with many openings for ventilation provided little protection against a violent gunman.

I tried to pray, but no thoughts or words came. God seemed a million miles away. I wondered who was being killed and how long it would be until the gunman broke into our classroom. I wondered why I couldn't pray.

In 1976, as part of a service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee, I was teaching English at St. Andrew Technical High School in Kingston, Jamaica. Although I loved teaching, I dreaded the daily drive to school through the violent streets of Kingston. Some city streets had been closed to vehicles because of danger from random gunfire.

I remember telling someone one day, "What bothers me most is the fear that I will die a totally senseless death—shot by a stray bullet. I can understand dying for a reason or a cause, but I can't bear the thought of being gunned down just because I happened to be walking down the street on a sunny day."

That morning in my classroom the sound of shots eventually subsided. Without seeming disturbed, students went back to their work. Their calm response to danger puzzled me. Then I realized that the intrusion of gunfire was a far too ordinary event where they lived. What unnerved me was a daily reality with which they had learned to cope.

But my peace had been broken. A police officer had been wantonly killed in the field beside my school. And with his death, a swirling fear rose to the surface of my brain and refused to go away. For the several months remaining in my term of service, I lived with an increasing sense of agitation and eventual exhaustion.

Why couldn't I pray in a moment of great danger? And why was I frozen with fear? How can a person who has grown up in a Christian family and in the church suddenly be so bereft of spiritual resources? Was my faith a fraud? Where was God when I most needed a refuge?

Senseless killing: During the next year I struggled to make sense of the avalanche of questions released by that day's events. I found some comfort when I read a similar story in Gail Sheehy's best-selling book *Passages: Predictable Crises in Adult Life* (E.P. Dutton, 1976). After witnessing senseless killing in the streets of Derry in Northern Ireland while working on a journalism assignment, she wrote,

"Some switch was thrown, and a series of weights began to roll across my brain like steel balls. ... The world was negligent. Thirteen could perish, or 13,000, I could perish, and tomorrow it would all be beside the point.

"As I joined the people lying on their stomachs, a powerful idea took hold: No one is with me. No one can keep me safe. There is no one who won't ever leave me alone.

"I had a headache for a year."

I learned from Sheehy's book that at age 33 I had been hurled into midlife crisis. Faced with my own fragile mortality, I discovered that the foundation of my faith was tottering. Though I had been an active Christian and church member for many years and could discuss the idea of trust in God, I didn't have a deep, abiding, personal sense of being safe in God's hands.

Several steps were important in

> ***How can a person who has grown up in a Christian family and in the church suddenly be so bereft of spiritual resources? Was my faith a fraud? Where was God when I most needed a refuge?***

Learning to listen to God and to trust that, in the words of the hymn, "Jesus will not fail me," has cost me the illusion that I am self-sufficient and can control my life.

reclaiming my spiritual health. I joined a small group of people who, with our pastor, were exploring the emotional foundations of faith. A memory that surfaced during this time was the devastation I felt at age 3 when a diphtheria epidemic swept through our little community and took three of my childhood friends, one a cousin. Thirty years later, I grieved their deaths and experienced healing of that childhood trauma.

I began reading about faith development. The work of James W. Fowler, eventually published in *Stages of Faith* (Harper & Row, 1981), was crucial in helping me understand the typical stages of spiritual growth and the obstacles that can stunt or hinder maturity.

Contemplative spirituality: At the same time I began reading the writings of Morton Kelsey and other spiritual guides, who introduced me to the world of contemplative spirituality. I remember sitting in a sun-filled library one day reading Kelsey's *Encounter with God* (Bethany Fellowship, 1972) and being awakened to the reality that God wants to meet me and know me. I felt I was being converted from a faith mainly of the mind to a faith that included heart and body as well.

But the most important step I took was to learn the disciplines of silence and contemplative prayer. In 1978 I was invited to participate in a three-day silent retreat. Fearful yet expectant, I opened myself to listen to God in ways I had never experienced. To my surprise and delight, I met a gentle, compassionate God in the silence, a God who called me to trust and friendship.

At the end of the retreat, we were instructed to go home and practice "praying the Scriptures" for at least six months before speaking too quickly of our experience to others. Though I couldn't resist telling a few close friends of my discovery, I did submit to the discipline of practicing what I had learned. For nearly two years I prayed the Psalms and the Gospels on a regular basis and opened myself to transformation. Out of that experience, others asked to join me on the spiritual journey, and eventually I acquired formal training for guiding people to meet God through the ministry of spiritual direction.

'House of love': The journey that began in a Jamaican classroom on a hot spring day has not been easy. Learning to listen to God and to trust that, in the words of the hymn, "Jesus will not fail me," has cost me the illusion that I am self-sufficient and can control my life. Henri Nouwen gave me words for such a conversion when he wrote about the long journey from the "house of fear to the house of love."

My conservative religious background, though it provided me with many gifts, did not give me what I needed most to grow toward God: a simple, secure confidence that nothing I could do—or not do—could separate me from God's love (Romans 8:38-39). What I received instead was conditional religion. If I did certain things and didn't do certain other things, I would be acceptable to God.

Such distorted thinking always leads to fear. Henri Nouwen says, "Most of us people of the 20th century live in the house of fear most of the time" (*Lifesigns* [Doubleday, 1986]). However, we are created for love—not fear. Intimacy with God cannot coexist with fear. Nor can we freely open our hands to others as long as we are full of fear.

On the journey from fear to love, Julian of Norwich has been my most trustworthy human guide. A 14th-century woman of prayer, Julian experienced a series of visions in which she was shown the profound goodness and love of God. Her book *Revelations of Divine Love* (Doubleday, 1977) reflects the reality of her life lived in the midst of a violent world filled with death. Yet beneath and above and beyond all she knows and sees, Julian perceives a deeper mystery—that love is our Lord's meaning. At the heart of reality is a faithful God who tenderly loves all that has been made and who promises that "all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

Slowly, painfully, joyfully, the conviction that all shall be well has come to dwell in my blood and bones. Though I have no way of knowing what dangers and distress lie ahead, I am convinced, with Paul, that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:39). Such good news offers great joy and opens the way for me to join with God's creative, loving, healing purposes in the world.

Marlene Kropf is minister of worship and spirituality at Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, and teaches worship and spiritual formation at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. This article is from a chapter in Godward: Personal Stories of Grace, *edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996).*

Strangers in their own land

Service to social needs requires communion with God.

Octavio Diaz

It was 9 a.m. and though the day was rainy, it didn't feel cold, at least not to me. To "Jaime" (names have been changed), however, it did. Used to a warm climate, he shivered in the 15 C/59 F temperature.

To tell the truth, I'm not sure which chill he felt the most, if it was the meteorological chill or that of his quandary. He had come from the southeast of Mexico—almost penniless and without knowing anyone who could help him—with his young wife, who is 20, four years younger than he is. They both came with the desire to work and to forge a more prosperous future.

Accustomed as Jaime and Carmela are to rural life—to knowing the people around them and chatting with them when their paths cross, to visiting and being visited in their home, to experiencing community and familial love and harmony—the thought of leaving to search for new horizons was not easy.

The economic situation—like a chess player moving people around like pawns, as if they had no intentions of their own, as if they had no convictions and principles of their own—had pushed this couple to leave Chiapas and head to Monterrey to seek help from relatives already established in that northern city.

Given the distance separating these two points, a stopover in Mexico City was inevitable. Also, a friend had recommended they visit a Mennonite church member "to see if he could help you."

Emily Will (MCC)

Like boats on the open sea: *An indigenous man in southern Mexico. Analysts believe that in Mexico alone some 1 million to 2 million poor rural inhabitants will be displaced to overburdened cities or to the United States in search of work and survival—due to the great economic distress hitting Latin America.*

In our little congregation, 55 percent of our funds are now given to help those in need.

Not having a place to sleep or food to eat obliges the pilgrim to do many things, some that even run counter to human dignity. The "new horizon" could not be more disheartening. People in their early 20s often dream, work and hold onto ideals, but being without diplomas, without knowing anyone "influential" and feeling like foreigners in their own country rudely awaken any who dare to dream.

"Let's go see if a friend with a car tire business might have some work for you," I said to Jaime.

My faith had been tested just realizing how many doors would remain closed to Jaime. But a couple of recommendation letters, an address in the city and, above all, the care of our Almighty God, who always hears our prayers, made it possible that first Jaime and then Carmela saw their longings for work fulfilled.

Six weeks sufficed for this young couple, housed in our church, to earn enough to continue their journey to Monterrey, from where we expect to soon receive news of their prosperity in all respects. Thanks be to God.

What I've just related may seem to be lifted from a sentimental storybook. The displacement of people due to poverty is not fiction, however, but one of today's real dilemmas in Mexico, in Latin America, in the whole world. I've read in the paper of many similar cases and have seen them on television. To live it out "in the flesh" is nonetheless different.

The orphan and the widow: One day during Jaime and Carmela's stay in Mexico City, the Bible reading in my daily devotional was Deuteronomy

10:11-22. "For the Lord your God is God of gods ... who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (10:17-19).

A few intimate moments with God were sufficient to make me realize the full impact of this Bible verse. Faced with such overpowering evidence, one can hardly be mistaken about God's will.

The displaced, widows and orphans, in the light of the Word, exemplify those who require attention in our society. Without neglecting others, I'm sure these are the most needy, lacking laws to protect them, husbands to stand by them, parents to educate them. All this, along with economic and material poverty, makes these individuals like boats on the open sea, with neither rudder nor route.

Since then I have desired to work more closely with displaced persons—even with other Mexicans who feel like strangers in our own land—and with orphans and widows. In our little congregation, 55 percent of our funds are now given to help those in need.

Finally, I'd like to assert that this emphasis on social needs requires complete communion with God, a total giving up of and dedication of oneself to the Lord's work. This is made clear in Acts 6:3: "Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task."

It's a big challenge then, but at the same time a blessing, this service God has entrusted in us. Let's get to work, with love and commitment, for Jesus is coming soon.

Octavio Diaz is a member of New Life (Vida Nueva) Mennonite Church in the San Andres neighborhood of Mexico City. He works part-time with the Mexico City/Puebla Conference of Mennonite Churches to assist individual congregations in developing outreach programs, some of which include nursery schools and children's feeding programs, medical care and marriage counseling. His work is partially funded by Mennonite Central Committee. This article first appeared in Correo, *No. 3, 1995.* Correo *is a Mennonite World Conference Spanish-language publication.*

Speaking out

A call for help

It's time to give aid to German-speaking Mennonites in Mexico.

Erwin Boschmann

Seventy-five years ago Mennonite Central Committee was founded in response to the call for help from a people in need. It took foresight and faith to create an organization large enough to be able to help; it took ingenuity and intelligence to plan; it took resources in time, talent and treasures to amass the wherewithal to help; and it took courage to deliver the goods to Russia.

Today, once again, there is a people in need, desperate need. No, the need is not for tractors or plows. The need is not far across the oceans. The need is not expressed in pleading calls for help from the destitute. The need is not brought to our consciousness on daily news releases. Although it tries, MCC has limited success. (Recent reports, however, report some progress.) However, the need is a severe one among a group of our own people. If not met, the need will lead to the destruction not so much of the body but of the soul of a people. The need is possibly greater than any we've faced.

This silent call for help may be the greatest challenge yet for the Mennonite peoplehood.

Though they do not seek it, the German-speaking Mennonites in Mexico (plus some of their group who live in Bolivia and in Paraguay) need our help. They are on a path of self-destruction that stems from the powerful dominance of a few men who dictate every aspect of their subjects' lives. It stems from ignorance that has turned cultural tradition into religion and religion into a ritual without impact. It stems from the refusal to train the mind and refusal to work with fellow travelers of this world. Though none of these reasons necessarily leads to destruction (after all, others have adopted the same lifestyle without danger), when coupled with economic hardships, as it now is, the system is on the road to collapse.

It is worrisome to read accounts of youth gangs in the Mennonite colonies warring among each other; of adults beating their children to break their will. I am troubled when, out of financial desperation and without a religious support structure, farmers grow marijuana. It is painful to read in the national press of fellow Mennonites having been jailed for trafficking illegal drugs. Worship is an obligatory habit, recited in a strange tongue and devoid of meaning to most. Education is limited to rote memorization of the catechism, taught by someone with a sixth-grade education. It is sad to see schoolchildren lacking facial expression for fear of reprisal from the teacher.

Though these people may not verbalize it, I hear a call for help—help to get out of the rut of stifling tradition, help to become free to develop and use God-given talents, help to overcome fear and suspicion of outsiders. This silent call for help may be the greatest challenge yet for the Mennonite peoplehood, especially for those of us in North America. Has there been an example in history of a people on a road to danger that found a way to save itself? Who will have the vision of a solution? Who will have the wisdom to design an approach that is caring, helpful and welcomed? Who will have the gift of articulating to us this desperate, silent call for help and the answer to that call? Who will have the courage and faith to act on that approach? Who will have the prophetic stamina to not let the silent call go unanswered?

Can you hear that silent call?

Erwin Boschmann is editor of MennoExpressions, *newsletter of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis. This article is reprinted from the Jan. 7 issue.*

Learning to pray

Seeking God's face in prayer

Six fundamental features of the prayer of discernment

Marlene Kropf

Of all the modes of prayer, perhaps none is so daunting and demanding as the prayer of discernment. When we find ourselves on a trackless path with few clues for continuing the journey, we seek God's face and ask, "What is your will? Which way shall we go?"

Anabaptists have always understood that learning God's will is not a solitary endeavor. Rather it is a three-way conversation among partners: the Word of God handed down to us, the living community of faith and the active presence of our guide, the Holy Spirit.

Whenever God's people face perplexing and troublesome situations, we can confidently ask for guidance and trust the Spirit to reveal God's will.

In the prayer of discernment we begin with the assumption that God wants to be made known. God does not delight in hiding from us but rather seeks communion with all human beings. Deuteronomy 30:11-20 suggests that God's word is not private or secret; it is not hidden in heaven nor beyond the sea. "No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe" (v. 14).

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of God in similar ways: "I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in chaos.' I the Lord speak the truth, I declare what is right" (Isaiah 45:19).

Despite God's willingness to be made known, many Christians struggle to discern God's ways in the ordinary circumstances of life. When a young adult seeks vocational direction, prayers for help sometimes seem to go unanswered. When congregations look for guidance on controversial issues, people often seem to hear conflicting messages from God.

Perhaps it would be helpful to look again at some fundamental features of the prayer of discernment:

1. Discernment is a spiritual discipline. Like other disciplines, it requires a basic posture of receptivity and openness to God. The capacity to recognize God's voice, an awareness that increases with practice, is dependent upon our willingness to trust the sure and steady movements of God's Spirit. Waiting and silence may be necessary components of such prayer.

> ***Perhaps more than anything, the church simply needs to risk the prayer of discernment. Even though the issues we face appear overwhelming, God is waiting to be made known.***

2. Discernment requires a commitment to Christian community, for the Spirit of Jesus lives within believers and often speaks in a human voice. We need other Christians to help us fully recognize and understand God's will. We must hear each other's stories and notice how God speaks uniquely to each person. Trained spiritual guides can provide invaluable assistance to individuals and congregations who are seeking God's will.

3. Discernment also requires paying attention to the world around us because God is at work in the events of our cultures and nations. God speaks in the voices of "little ones," especially those who are poor and burdened, as well as in the broad social movements and changes of our day.

4. Discernment takes time, energy and patience. Because of our human limitations, we cannot always come quickly to common understandings of God's ways. The hymn-prayer, "Take the dimness of my soul away," may need to be prayed over and over.

5. As we glimpse God's face and sense what God desires, we need to act on our perceptions, even though they may seem incomplete. Often God's way is revealed gradually; as we take one small step in faith, we are able to see the next step. If we inadvertently go astray, God can be counted on to reveal error.

RNS

6. Even though demanding, the prayer of discernment brings great joy. As Christians sense the Spirit's movements, energy is released for creative ministry. It is a wonderful thing to be joined with the ever-moving Spirit of God at work in the world.

Perhaps more than anything, the church simply needs to risk the prayer of discernment. Even though the issues we face appear overwhelming, God is waiting to be made known. We can surely trust Jesus' promise to us, "The Spirit of truth ... will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13).

News

VS staffs ready for merger

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MBM)—At a Jan. 29-31 meeting in St. Louis, the staff of Mennonite Voluntary Service (General Conference) and the service programs of Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church) gave an enthusiastic thumbs up to a proposal to merge their two programs.

The proposal needs approval from their respective boards, which meet in March and February, before any further action will be taken.

The two programs have a history of cooperation. One short-term summer program, Mennonite Service Venture, has been jointly operated for several years. MVS, MBM service programs and Mennonite Central Committee have shared their volunteer applications for many years.

The staffs have had more serious conversations in recent years about how they can work more cooperatively. With the vote in favor of integration of the two denominations at Wichita '95, they felt the timing was right. "The churches have called us to it," says Miles Reimer, MVS associate director for the western United States.

"Voluntary service work requires a lot of teamwork and support. The financial realities are such that we can't afford to have two small programs," says Saul Murcia, MBM Voluntary Service coordinator.

"It makes sense for us to unify our energies during a tough time in our history," agrees Chuck Neufeld, MVS director.

Phil Waite, who is the MBM Service Adventure coordinator, thinks the merger would give "a tremendous boost to our service programs" because the staff would relate to a larger cross-section of Mennonites.

Many constituents, Reimer says, would also welcome the change because they would only have to call one location to find out the service opportunities that are available from both denominations.

The merger would also allow for greater efficiency in terms of time and money, he says, noting that staff would likely be responsible for smaller geographical areas. This, in turn, would cut down on travel costs.

Reimer added that even though not all the questions about the new structure were answered at the meeting, the staff were willing to move ahead with the proposal because of the level of trust they had for each other.

"We share a strong, common vision that is rooted in Anabaptist theology," said Reimer. "We believe that service

MVS sees drop in number of volunteers

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Although Mennonite Voluntary Service is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, staff members aren't feeling the security that often comes with older age.

While MVS has expanded from its initial summer service projects in Chicago in 1946 to 21 units in 20 locations in North America today, staff members are concerned about a drop in volunteers.

At the end of 1995, the number of MVS volunteers totaled 59, down from 75 at the end of 1994. Ten years ago the number totaled 112. Other Mennonite agencies are experiencing a decline in volunteers as well.

MVS director Chuck Neufeld, who has served with MVS in various capacities for 22 years, sent a letter to all GC churches Feb. 5 that stated, in part, "I don't recall a more critical situation than the personnel problem we are facing today."

This reality is coupled with an increase in the requests from churches to start new MVS units. "We find it terribly frustrating to be dealing with a reduced volunteer corps just when the need for volunteers appears to be at an all-time high," wrote Neufeld. He noted that MVS needs at least 40 additional volunteers to fill positions immediately.

Inside the news

Ministerial offices set to merge / p. 14

Taiwan church sends first missionary / p. 15

CEE assigns workers to orphanage / p. 15

Mexican leaders participate in Anabaptist Biblical Institute / p. 16

Mexico City ministers evangelize / p. 17

South African women's conference held / p. 17

Churches hold consultation on gambling / p. 18

The work of Sunrise Mennonite Church, Clackamas, Ore., can be seen in the movie *Mr. Holland's Opus*, now in theaters across the United States. When the movie was filmed at Grant High School in Portland, Ore., in the summer of 1994, church members filled 2,500 helium balloons that were used in a parade scene. The project was a fund-raiser for the church's youth group.

• • •

Five Mennonite workers in Maseru, Lesotho, were held in an armed robbery Jan. 19. The Mennonite Ministries Lesotho guesthouse is attached to the home of program directors Bill and Betty Enns. The Ennses, Mennonite Central Committee staffperson Jim Shenk and two other MCC workers were held while thieves stole cash, valuables and two MCC vehicles. No one was hurt. The thieves returned the next day, taking, among other items, a video camera and television. The vehicles have been recovered, although one was rolled and completely stripped. The Ennses have decided to stay in the house, but security is being improved, including the installation of metal doors, heavier bars on windows, and a rapid response system for alerting a security firm when a break-in occurs.

Western District Conference has ended efforts to plant a church in Tulsa, Okla. Robert Martz, church planter there for WDC, has accepted a call to pastor the Martin Box Mennonite Brethren Church in Marshall, Ark. Martz and his wife, Sherry, discontinued church planting activity in part because of health problems that began to confront Sherry last summer. There is not a continuing group in Tulsa.

• • •

Teams from the General Conference Mennonite Church offices and the Western District Conference met Feb. 2 at the GCMC central offices in Newton, Kan., for orientation to the Damascus Road, an anti-racism training process for Mennonite institutions (see our Feb. 13 issue, page 13). These two teams will join teams from seven other institutions at training sessions in March and May. The emphasis, said trainer Jody Miller Shearer of Mennonite Central Committee U.S., is on equipping people, not convincing them there's a problem.

• • •

Mennonite Disaster Service is responding to the damage caused by recent flooding in the U.S. Northeast, says MDS executive coordinator Lowell Detweiler. A heavy snowfall earlier this year followed by milder temperatures and heavy rains resulted in serious flooding in some parts of the region in mid-January. "The whole Susquehanna River region from Port Deposit, Md., up to Williamsport, Pa., will be one of our main areas of focus," said Detweiler. MDS investigators have also been sent to parts of New York, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland to determine what help, if any, MDS will provide. Although MDS is still assessing the extent of the disaster and the organization's response, it will likely be a long-term project.

is the hands and feet of the Good News."

Most young adults, who represent the majority of volunteers, don't make a distinction between the MC and GC world, says Waite. "Their response will be, 'It makes sense. It is about time,'" he says, noting that many, including himself, have served with several Mennonite agencies. *Carla Reimer*

New MVS director named

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Miles Reimer, Newton, has been appointed Mennonite Voluntary Service director effective July 1.

Since July 1994, he has shared the full-time position of associate MVS director for western United States with his wife, Kathy Landis. Prior to that, Reimer, who is a native of Winnipeg, served as associate MVS director for Canada.

Reimer

"Service work has profoundly enriched my life. In service, we discover the presence of God's Spirit in our own life and in the lives of those around us," says Reimer.

"There are interesting challenges ahead for service programs. There is less money available for programs to assist the poor and disadvantaged in our communities, which increases the need for service workers," he says. "At the same time, there are fewer people applying for service work outside their communities."

Reimer is a member of New Creation Fellowship, Newton.

He will replace Chuck Neufeld, also of Newton, who has served as the MVS director since 1987. Neufeld and his wife, Bonnie, have accepted a call to serve as associate pastors with the Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., beginning this summer.

Neufeld will continue to work part-time as associate MVS director for eastern United States. He also will continue to recruit and itinerate for MVS.

Ministerial offices ready to merge

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—The ministerial offices of the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church may be integrated next year.

At a Jan. 12-13 meeting in Chicago the GC Committee on the Ministry (the MCs do not have a similar reference council), together with MC and GC ministerial staff, took action to recommend that the two ministerial offices operate under an integrated structure as early as February 1997.

Dale Stoltzfus, minister of congregational leadership for the MC Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM), says, "We made a decision in much less time than we had anticipated because the trust level was high. Over the last number of years, the staff have developed close relationships. No one had the desire to carve out their own turf." Anne Stuckey also serves as a minister of congregational leadership for MBCM.

"When the discussion moved from forming an integrated committee on the ministry to include the joining of staff and services, we were ready to move," agrees John Esau, GC director of Ministerial Leadership Services.

"We have multiple dually affiliated congregations and several dually affiliated conferences. If we had decided not to make this move to respond with a single voice, we would not be serving them as effectively as we should," Esau says.

The recommendation still needs approval from the GC General Board and the MBCM board in March before any next steps are taken.

According to Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, GC Committee on the Ministry member and conference minister for the dually affiliated Pacific Southwest Conference, "there is no question that this is absolutely the right decision. The staff have been working together so closely—this simply will formalize what has already been established on a more informal level."

Canada unsure: Bill Block, associate executive secretary for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada Leadership Commission, wonders how CMC would relate to an integrated ministerial structure. He notes that in terms of the broader picture of integration, Canadian Mennonites would be in favor of having their own national office.

"The Canadian piece doesn't fit smoothly into the integration picture. But it is a pretty big piece [of the puzzle]," Block says, adding that he thinks "Canada represents a level of conference that most people south of our border don't understand well."

"My intent," says Esau, "would be that these new denominational arrangements will enable us to continue to cooperate with the CMC Leadership Commission and its staff in the same manner as we have been doing for the last 11 years." *Carla Reimer*

Taiwan church sends first missionary

Taichung, Taiwan (GCMC)—Tears trickled down the cheeks of 91-year-old Tien-min Wung during the Jan. 28 commissioning service for Ying-Kuei Yeh at the Hsi-Tun Mennonite Church here.

A long-time evangelist within the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT), Wung said, "I am so happy that Hsi-Tun church is sending out a missionary."

Yeh, who is a member of Hsi-Tun, will leave at the end of February for a three-year assignment with a Christian drug rehabilitation center in northern Thailand.

It is the first time that FOMCIT has sent a mission worker overseas. The Hsi-Tun congregation has assumed full financial responsibility for her support.

Sheldon Sawatzky, mission worker in Taiwan with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church, gave a message based on John 20:21. "Every church should support two pastors—one for the hundreds at home and one for the millions abroad," he said.

At the Morning Light Drug Rehabilitation Center, Yeh will work mainly with women from 10 tribal groups. She hopes to help lead a Bible teaching program for converted drug addicts, assist with the rehabilitation of drug addicts, and minister to her co-workers.

"Many of those who believe in Christ have little or no educational background. They need help in nourishing and building up their Christian faith," said Yeh.

The Morning Light drug rehabilitation program began in Hong Kong and has spread to several other Asian countries, including Thailand and Taiwan. There are an estimated 1.5 million drug users in Thailand; more than 800 of them have received help at the Morning Light centers located there.

The decision to send out a missionary comes about two years after the dissolution of the General Conference's mission organization in Taiwan and the Taiwan Mennonite Church's restructuring into an independent national church. There are 19 churches —with a membership of about 1,200—that belong to FOMCIT. The first COM workers arrived in Taiwan in 1954.

"The cycle of mission has come full circle. The church planted by Mennonite missionaries is now a mission-sending church," said Sawatzky. *From a report by Sheldon Sawatzky*

CEE assigns workers to Chinese orphanage

Akron, Pa. (MCC/CEE)—In recent weeks, conditions at orphanages in China have attracted attention from Western human rights organizations and media, with reports of intentional starvation and "dying rooms" by a former employee and resident of an orphanage in Shanghai.

Last fall, China Educational Exchange (CEE) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) were invited to place workers at a new orphanage in Guangan, Sichuan Province. Two North Americans will begin work there this summer.

This invitation came as a result of contacts CEE teachers have made. For several years now, teachers serving

Larry Penner, Newton, Kan., has resigned his position as assistant editor of *The Mennonite* effective April 1. He has worked for *The Mennonite* since August 1992. A replacement has yet to be named. "I'm grateful for my time here at *The Mennonite*," he says. "It is exciting to participate in an organization when you can see the kind of direct, positive social impact it has on people's lives every day." Penner is a member of First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Neb., and attends Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton. His future plans are uncertain.

Penner

• • •

The Vision: Healing and Hope committee met for the first time in Los Angeles Jan. 18 to look at how churches could be encouraged to take ownership of the vision statement adopted by Wichita '95 delegates this past summer. A number of area conferences have decided to focus on the vision statement in the coming years. It will also be the theme of the 1997 Mennonite Church adult convention in Orlando, Fla. The committee's ideas included the following: (1) reprinting the Vision: Healing and Hope statement; (2) affirming the commitment of the GC Commission on Education to publish three electives related to the vision; (3) encouraging churches to choose one Sunday each year to focus on the statement; (4) inviting pastors to submit sermon outlines and other worship resources about healing and hope, and (5) asking institutional staff and board members to be available to speak on the vision and to spend time in prayer.

with this inter-Mennonite program have regularly visited orphanages. Their involvement began after one teacher in Sichuan Province found an abandoned baby girl in the street. Several teachers have also urged their Chinese students to accompany them on the visits.

"The word 'orphanage' in this case is a misnomer," says Ann Martin, secretary of MCC's East Asia programs. "The majority of such Chinese institutions could more accurately be called 'foundling homes,' since most of the children living in them were abandoned and do in fact have parents. Most of the abandoned are female, sick and/or have disabilities."

China's drive toward a more Western market economy has led to government cutbacks in almost all social services, says Myrrl Byler, CEE director. Orphanage workers are often poorly trained and fall into the lowest income brackets, which sometimes leads to low morale and irresponsibility. CEE teachers who have regularly visited orphanages say staff are generally accepting of assistance, when it is offered sensitively.

"I have heard that as many as 50 percent of children in some orphanages die of malnutrition and lack of adequate care. However, the Amity Foundation says the deaths are not intentional and represent one of the reasons we should work with orphanages," says Byler.

Martin adds that an Amity program in one orphanage has lowered the mortality rate to 20 percent, but this has created problems because of lack of funds to care for the increased number of survivors.

Ting Yenren of the Amity Foundation, a Christian service agency, believes that, in light of government cuts in social services, private sector

Bible training program goes to Mexico

Training leaders: *Guete (center) leads a group exercise.*

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Fifteen people representing 13 Spanish-speaking Mennonite churches in northwestern Mexico got a taste of the Instituto Biblico Anabautista (Anabaptist Biblical Institute) when Marco Guete visited them Jan. 19-21.

Guete is the IBA director and director of resource ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries. He started this Bible study program in 1988 in order to help train Hispanic pastors and lay leaders. Over 300 Spanish-speaking Mennonites in North America have used the curriculum to date.

The Pacific Coast Conference of the Mennonite Church started mission work in this area of Mexico more than 37 years ago. The churches, which have about 300 members, now relate as a sister conference to the Pacific Northwest Conference and the Hispanic Council of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Hispanic Mennonite churches in North America have well-trained leaders who have a minimum of two years of college education, says Guete. In contrast, many of the Mexican Mennonite pastors he interacted with only have received a primary education. The leaders say they usually work at another job in order to provide enough income for their families.

Many live in villages that provide minimal services such as water and electricity. However, other basics such as sewer lines are not available. A typical salary is 20 pesos a day, approximately $3 U.S. Two kilos of tortillas, enough to feed a family of four for one day, cost about $2 U.S. "Here, we have a land of plenty. In Mexico, there is a lot of need," Guete says.

But he observes that their faith may be stronger as a result. "People in Mexico seem to be more dependent on God. They seem to struggle more with what it means to be faithful," he says, noting how one youth told how he felt bad because he had not shared the gospel message with anyone that week.

Dale Schertz is celebrating serving 50 years as pastor at Zion Mennonite Church, Remington, Ind.

* * *

Youth Venture is offering service opportunities for youth this summer in the United States, Canada and Colombia. Youth Venture is sponsored by Mennonite Service Venture, a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church. The 1996 Youth Venture locations and dates are Seattle, July 6-24; Portland, Ore., July 14-21; Markham, Ont., July 20-Aug. 3 and Aug. 3-17; Montreal, July 28-Aug. 4; Toronto, Aug. 4-10; Manigotagan, Man., Aug. 4-10; and Wichita, Kan., Aug. 4-17. The Youth Venture in Colombia is scheduled for Aug. 3-17. It is limited to eight participants. For more information contact Nora Miller, Youth Venture, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

* * *

A church in Boise, Idaho, has begun offering services for people who are sensitive to unnatural fragrances and petroleum-based fibers like polyester. Boise United Methodist Church holds the service in the church's chapel, made of untreated materials, avoiding the chemical-laden carpeting of the main sanctuary. Water and canola oil are used in cleaning the chapel, and two hours before the service fans are turned on to clear the air. Worshipers are asked to come fragrance-free and wear only natural-fiber clothes, as do the pianist, organist and minister. Has the idea's time come among Mennonites? *Mennonite Reporter* tells of a recent meeting where Mennonites irritated by chemicals shared concerns. One, a former missionary and active church worker, says, "I get violently ill when I come in contact with the scents of various products worshipers use." She tells of nausea, shaky knees, stiff neck, poor coordination, loss of short-term memory, loss of eyesight and insomnia.

involvement can lead to "many opportunities for substantial improvement" in orphanage care.

Mexican ministers know how to evangelize

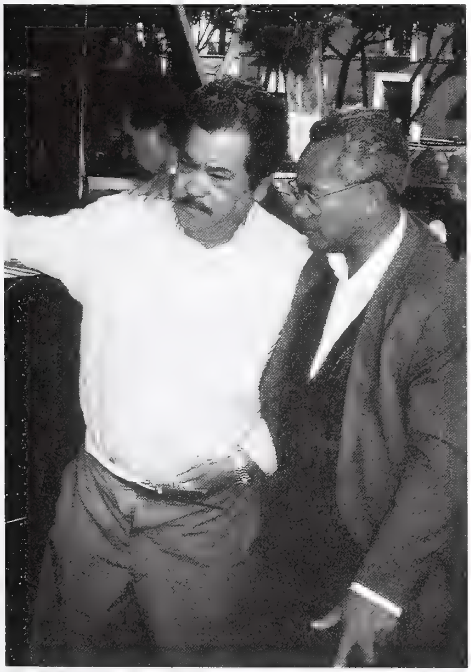
Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—On the crowded streets of Mexico City, home to about 24 million people, Vicente Minino pauses to witness to a vendor who is selling lottery tickets. Near the end of his conversation with the woman, he puts his arm around her shoulders and begins to pray.

It's not at all unusual for Vicente to engage in street evangelism. In fact, he often combines his daily errands with sharing about his Christian beliefs.

That is what Jeannie Zehr and Karen McCabe-Juhnke, staff members of the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), discovered during a Jan. 6-15 visit to Mexico City.

"Most of us would feel uncomfortable about sharing our faith with a stranger," says Zehr, noting that Vicente uses every opportunity—from sending a fax to visiting a hospital—to spread God's word in Mexico City.

Vicente and his wife, Carmen, find that their personal approach to evangelism results in new believers. The vendor that Vicente witnessed to decided to accept Christ. Close to 80 people now attend the New Life Anabaptist Mennonite Church of Coyoacan, which the Mininos started two years ago.


Jeannie Zehr

Always telling: *Vicente Minino (right) witnesses to a man he met in a Mexico City park.*

The other Mennonite leaders in Mexico City have met with similar success. There are 20 cell groups and three new churches with a total of 235 baptized members.

Each cell or growth group meets once a week, usually in the evening, for a time of sharing, singing and Bible teaching. The children also receive instruction. Each cell group is expected to form a new group once the members number about 20.

The two COM staff also were impressed with the way the church members and leaders focused on prayer. "Here, we are more hesitant to pray in public, maybe because we are self-conscious," says Zehr. "They seem to have more openness to share what Christ means in their lives."

The following Mennonite organizations support the work in Mexico City: COM, Mennonite Brethren Missions/Service, Mennonite Board of Missions, Franconia Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Central Committee, Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Evangelical Mennonite Church. *Carla Reimer*

South African women share hurts at theology conference

Umtata, South Africa (GCMC)—Approximately 55 South African women watched as the slips of paper on which they had written about their painful experiences were engulfed in flames.

The slips of paper were lit as an offering to God and as part of the closing Communion service of a Jan. 15-16 conference here called "Women and the Water of Life."

"We wanted the conference to be a place where South African women could share their hurts in an attempt to begin the healing process," says Jean Isaac. She belongs to the women's theology group that organized the event.

"The women's pain comes from many sources: domestic abuse and

The Virginia Conference of the Mennonite Church will continue to allow congregations to grant membership to people in the military, but it does not endorse the practice. Delegates took the position Jan. 20, hoping to resolve a five-year debate on church members in the military. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Bluffton (Ohio) College president Elmer Neufeld gave his last state of the college address Jan. 9. He has served Bluffton 31 years, including 18 as president. "The college's motto, 'The truth makes free,' suggests a search for truth and knowledge, realizing that the ultimate truth is in Christ," he said. He indicated that upon retirement he plans to maintain an office on campus.

• • •

The challenge to form partnerships in mission and share resources, expertise and power came through clearly in the annual meeting of the Council of International Ministries Jan. 14-17 in Chicago. Participants closed the gathering with calls for more inter-Mennonite and ecumenical cooperation, more sharing of decision-making and power, as well as greater risk-taking in forming partnerships.

• • •

Conductor Daniel Hege received the 1996 Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) Young Alumni Award Feb. 9. Hege, who graduated in 1987, serves as associate conductor of the Kansas City Symphony, music director of the Chicago Youth Symphony and Encore Chamber Orchestra and music director of Newton Mid-Kansas Symphony Orchestra. He was recently appointed assistant conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, a post he will officially begin this fall.

Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office will sponsor a spring seminar, "Engaging the Powers." The seminar, to be held March 31-April 2 in Washington, will explore Christian witness to the state. Contact the office at 110 Maryland Ave., NE, Suite 502, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 544-6564, e-mail mccwash@igc.apc.org.

• • •

Mennonites in and around Clay Center, Kan., met Jan. 26 to celebrate Menno Simons' 500th birthday in the home of Dale and Janice Hershberger. There is no Mennonite church within 40 miles of Clay Center, but Mennonites have moved there. At least 11 families claim Mennonite roots. All have found church homes in other denominations but like to keep in touch with their Mennonite roots.

• • •

Max Ediger, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Burma, recounts a story of peace from the Burmese countryside, where the national militia sought to breed hatred between Buddhist and Christian ethnic groups. The Burmese military had formed a Buddhist militia to antagonize Christians in Burma's eastern Karen province. The militia entered a village where relationships were good between Christian and Buddhist neighbors, and demanded that the Buddhists and Christians stand to show their readiness to join their militant organization. The people were frightened, but only a few stood. The militia leader went to the Buddhist pagoda to demand gasoline from its elderly monk to burn the Christian church. The monk did not resist but asked that when the church was burned, his own pagoda be burned also, saying that if the militia didn't burn the pagoda along with the church, the monk would do it himself. The monk stood by the Christians, saying, "We all drink from the same river." The soldiers hung their heads and walked away.

violence; the apartheid system that has left them marginalized economically, politically and educationally; the fact that many of their loved ones have died; lack of employment and decent housing," says Isaac, who serves in Umtata with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

The guest speaker was Chung Hyun Kyung, a well-known feminist liberation theologian from Seoul, South Korea. She told how she became dissatisfied when she was told, "'If you believe in Jesus, you must be patient.' I came to see that to be angry at injustice is an act of faith."

She also encouraged the participants to shed the traditional views about the role of women and to read the Bible with critical eyes. "To read the Bible uncritically is hazardous to the health," she said, adding that "God's revelation is not finished. Life, not only the Bible, is a holy book. There must be dialogue between the Bible and our lives."

The participants looked at a number of Bible passages, including the story about the Samaritan woman. They discussed how she also experienced discrimination. Yet Jesus acknowledged her.

"The theme was relevant to our South African situation. I became aware of the pain that all women face. It made me ready to face the challenges that come with change," said participant Pule Tshangela.

"I experienced hope in spite of all the turmoil around us," said participant Pat Gebeda.

This is the fourth time the Umtata-based women's theology group has sponsored a conference. They also have published eight Bible study booklets on a variety of topics from physical abuse to aging to AIDS.

The group, which was formed in 1987, meets twice a month for Bible study and sharing. Eleven of the 12 members belong to mainline churches. The remaining woman belongs to an African Independent Church.

For Nokuzola Mahlangu, her participation in the women's theology group has given her "a sense of confidence as a Christian woman that women played and are still playing a leading role in the church in spite of the fact that they are not recognized." *From a report by Jean Isaac in Umtata, South Africa*

Meeting on gambling asks, 'What's the church to do?'

Gulfport, Miss. (MBM)—About three dozen Mennonites gathered here Jan. 26 to stake the boundaries of ministry in a gaming community.

"The issue of gaming generally is brought down to simple terms: Are you for it or against it?" said Allan Yoder, director of evangelism and church development for Mennonite Board of Missions. "The question we want to raise is, How do we minister in a context such as this?"

The most questions came from David Kniss, pastor at Gulfhaven Mennonite Church here. Since 1992, when Mississippians approved local option on off-shore gaming by a 5 percent margin, Kniss and his congregation have wrestled with the question, What would Jesus do?

"[A ban on casino gambling] is not one of the Ten Commandments," said Kniss, whose congregation includes several casino employees.

"When you are a pastor in a gaming community, it's hard to come up with any solid answers," he said. "I don't want to make the gambling end of pastoring the big issue in pastoring, but it permeates more than we want to admit."

Kniss said he was originally "very sure of myself," but that certainty eroded when he sought to apply his beliefs to unforeseen dilemmas:

- Should a secretary with children to support making $6 an hour refuse a $12 an hour secretarial job at a casino?
- Should teachers tell their schools

Just a game: *Senior citizens at the slots*

Tom Price (MBM)

Tom Price (MBM)

Waiting for a win: *Roulette at the Lady Luck Casino*

to refuse long-overdue salary increases and money for education?

- Should Christians continue to work to expel the gaming community from its beachhead in Mississippi or should they accept a new opportunity for ministry?

Repeatedly the image of Jesus, "the friend of tax collectors and sinners," entered discussions. "It is sometimes too easy for us to distance ourselves from those people we categorize as sinners," said Mark Thiessen Nation, a doctoral candidate in Christian ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. "We think the alternatives are either this rigid judgmentalism on the one side or being neutral about things. Those are not the only two alternatives."

The discipline of an authentic Christian community in which fellowship becomes a reality can do more than anything to communicate "freedom from mammon," Nation said.

Kniss has seen some of that at Gulfhaven. "After (people) are brought in and the church loves them and puts a warm arm of fellowship around their shoulders, we see them changing slowly," he said. *Tom Price*

The bad with the good

Gulfport, Miss. (MBM)—Most of what gaming promised the Mississippi Gulf Coast, it has delivered: jobs, economic development, tax revenues.

But it's the things gaming didn't mention that trouble Gulfport Police Chief George Payne Jr.

"For five years in my city, we had reduced the crime by double-digits every year," says Payne. Now he sees crime increasing almost across the board: arson, embezzlement, assaults, suicides and attempted suicides.

In one year, arrests for driving while intoxicated rose 131 percent, drug-related arrests jumped 49 percent, and domestic disputes nearly tripled.

"Why do you think domestic disputes are up?" Payne says. "[Casinos] advertise bring your payroll check here on a Friday night. ... [People] go home without a paycheck [and] in a lot of trouble."

Bankruptcies increased 300 percent, while the number of pawn shops grew sixfold, to 36. A strip club recently opened in Gulfport, and two days before the casino consultation, police shut down "a massage parlor where they did more than massaging. We had three rapes in one weekend that were directly related to the casino," he adds.

Retired residents on fixed incomes saw rents nearly double. A local soup kitchen's meals increased from 70 to 300 per day. The Salvation Army says casinos send their "guests" to them when they are intoxicated or have spent all their money.

Gamblers Anonymous didn't exist along the Gulf Coast; now there are eight chapters.

Despite the negative statistics, Payne is quick to mention the positive contributions casinos have made. The number of police officers doubled while the police budget grew from $4.2 million to $11 million. Harrison County now has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. New roads and other infrastructure improvements continue to occur.

But this influx of revenue carries some strings.

"Our economics, our education, are dependent upon the weakness of our community rather than the strengths of our community," says David Kniss, pastor of Gulfhaven Mennonite Church. "How do we as pastors and churches deal with these issues?" *Tom Price*

The Mennonite Camping Association's biennial convention will be held March 18-21 at Lakewood Retreat, Brooksville, Fla. Contact MCA at P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245, (219) 294-7523.

• • •

The Northern District Conference will host a workshop on domestic violence and sexual abuse March 1-2 in Sioux Falls, S.D. For information contact Jerilyn Wuertz at 119 South Van Epps, Sioux Falls, SD 57103, or call (605) 338-6020.

• • •

Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) will sponsor the 10th Congress on Urban Ministry April 21-24 in Chicago. Contact SCUPE at (312) 726-1200.

• • •

Lemuel So, an Eastern Mennonite Missions church planter in Philadelphia, recently won the Anabaptist History and Faith Essay Contest for North American Chinese Mennonites. So won the first place award of $250 for his essay on the assigned topic of "The Anabaptist Vision." Funds for the award come from the Schowalter Foundation through the Commission on Home Ministries.

• • •

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund has sucessfully completed its campaign to generate 10,000 letters to Congress from individuals in support of the Peace Tax Fund Bill. The campaign reports that nearly one-third of every income-tax dollar is spent for current military purposes. An estimated 10,000 to 20,000 taxpayers violate tax law each year rather than violate their conscience.

Record

MINISTERS

Curtiss Bueckert is half-time youth pastor at Zoar Church, Langham, Sask.

Russell Detweiler is interim pastor at Eden Church, Schwenksville, Pa.

Hans Federau is pastor at Clearbrook Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

John Freed was installed as pastor of congregational care at First Church, Berne, Ind., Jan. 14.

Darren Friesen is youth pastor at Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask.

Paul Funk is youth worker at Wildwood Church, Saskatoon.

Brent Kipfer is pastor at St. Agatha (Ont.) Church. He replaces **Emmanuel George**.

John P. Klassen was installed as pastor at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, Jan. 7. He replaces **Abe Neufeld**.

Clayton Lane is associate youth pastor at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon.

Robert and **Sherry Martz** have resigned as Western District Conference church planters in Tulsa, Okla.

Jake Pauls is interim pastor at Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg.

Marvin Penner is pastor at Bethel Church, Wolf Point, Mont.

Vicki Penner was licensed Feb. 11 as pastor at Faith Church, Newton, Kan.

Debbie Schmidt is pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan.

Kay Welsch is interim pastor at Faith Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

Bob Zehr was installed as pastor at Living Water Church, New Hamburg, Ont., in January.

WORKERS

Jude Krehbiel, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., is half-time secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries.

Peter Rempel, Winnipeg, has been named executive secretary of the Council of International Ministries. Rempel also serves as personnel secretary, Africa liaison and secretary for Europe and the former Soviet Union for the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Give
THE **Mennonite**
to a friend.

To order call 1-800-757-5101.

Overseas Teaching Opportunities

with the
Commission on
Overseas Mission

English (ESL) in Japan and China

missionary children in West Africa

Bible classes in Lesotho

theology in Bolivia

P.O. Box 347, Newton,
KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

Goshen College announces a three-year position in **applied mathematics and computer science** beginning in fall 1996. A long-term appointment is possible depending on program growth. Responsibilities include teaching introductory and advanced computer and mathematics courses. Master's degree and graduate study in applied mathematics and computer science are required; Ph.D. in mathematics, computer science or related area is preferred. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send curriculum vitae and three letters of reference to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660;** e-mail: Johndn@goshen.edu. <http://www.goshen.edu>.

Camp Friedenswald announces an opening for **executive director**. The camp is seeking someone with a dynamic Anabaptist/Christian faith who has a vision for camping and retreat ministries. The executive director will be expected to shape an organizational culture around the core values of service, innovation, trust, compassion, stewardship, learning, action, and mutual support and accountability. The executive director is responsible for articulating the mission of the camp and maintaining its spiritual foundation. Other responsibilities include recruiting and supervising staff and developing a strategic plan, budgets, and plans for marketing and development. New facilities promise to bring enhanced vitality and exciting opportunities to the camp. Deadline for resumes is **March 15, 1996**.

Send resumes and inquiries to: **Search Committee, Attn: Beth Cender, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031.**

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track position in **education** beginning in fall 1996. Rank dependent on qualifications. ABD considered; doctorate preferred. The successful candidate will hold an advanced degree in elementary education; evidence of effective teaching, crucial and graduate-level teaching preferred. Responsibilities include teaching graduate and undergraduate education courses in foundation, curriculum methods and classroom management, as well as placement and supervision of student teachers. Consideration of applications begins March 1 and continues until an appointment is made.

Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac.

The National Woman's Christian Temperance Union is sponsoring a sermon contest on the theme "The Church Facing the Alcohol Problem." The sermon must be submitted by May 1, 1996, and have been preached by that time. All publishing rights will belong to the National WCTU. Prizes to be awarded are: first, $750; second, $500; and third, $250.

Resource packets ($4, including postage) and complete rules are available from Rev. Mary Ann Freeman; 1527 East 37th Street, Marion, IN 46953; (317) 674-6229.

Peace Mennonite Church is inviting applications for **associate pastor(s) to youth**, including junior high, senior high and college-age ministry, and **associate pastor(s) of family life**, including oversight and development of an ongoing ministry to mothers of preschoolers and of children's ministry. These positions are open to married couples or singles and are to commence Aug. 1, 1996.

For more information, please contact **Peace Mennonite Assoc. Pastor Search Committee Chair, c/o Peace Mennonite Church, 11571 Daniels Road, Richmond, BC V6X 1M7, (604) 278-0111, fax (604) 273-2678.**

TAUGHT BY
CHRIST'S SPIRIT
FORMED BY
CHRIST'S MIND

Come join our community
of learning and worship with
other students from diverse
denominations and cultures.
Select from ten programs of study.
Participate in our cross-cultural program.

Call 1-800-368-2665.

EASTERN
MENNONITE
SEMINARY

*A Graduate Division of
Eastern Mennonite University*

Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Hopi Mission School seeks a **director**. This position administers the private elementary school of 40 pupils. Starting date July 1, 1996, or sooner.

Send resume to **Gordan L. Flight, Principal, Hopi Mission School, P.O. Box 39, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039, (520) 734-2453.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **administrative assistant**, Personnel Services, in Akron, Pa. This two-year, full-time position is available May 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants should have training/experience in personal computer database management, word processing and spreadsheet program; strong organizational, secretarial and communications skills, and problem-solving ability.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **April 1**.

Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., is seeking a **first-grade teacher** to start March 1. If interested, the individual could also teach during the 1996-97 school year.

Send letter of interest or call **Kristen Mayhue, Mennonite Voluntary Service, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100.**

Faculty position in chemistry: One-year sabbatical replacement beginning this fall. Ph.D. preferred. Must be committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Primary teaching responsibilities: Organic and life science chemistry. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume **by March 29, 1996,** to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

MCC
BIKE OREGON
1996

AUGUST 5-9, 1996

**Cycle Oregon's lakes
and mountains on the biennial
Bike Oregon Tour for the
benefit of MCC.**

For information contact:

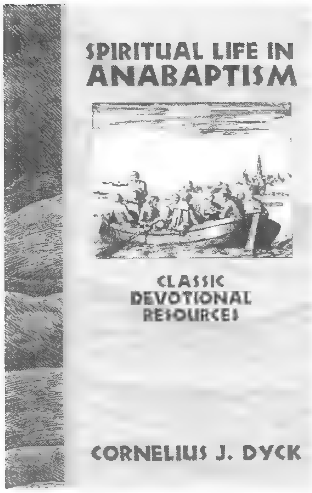
MCC BIKE OREGON 96
Jorge Tro, 376 SE 7th, Canby, OR 97013
(503) 266-6121

SPIRITUAL LIFE IN ANABAPTISM

Classic Devotional Resources

By **Cornelius J. Dyck**

By selecting and translating classic writings from early Anabaptism, Dyck shows that the Anabaptist tradition has nourishing spiritual food to offer. A resource for readers of all backgrounds interested in pondering spiritual life and its relation to prayer, Bible reading, attending church, work life, and much more.
Paper, 312 pages, $16.95; in Canada $24.25.



Available through your local bookstore or by calling **1 800 759-4447**.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999
hp%mph@mcimail.com

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
hpcan%mph@mcimail.com

Reviews

Demmie Todd (Gramercy)

On death row: *Penn and Sarandon*

FILMS

DEATH PENALTY ON SCREEN

Dead Man Walking, *written and directed by Tim Robbins, produced by Jon Kilik, Rudd Simmons and Tim Robbins*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Dead Man Walking brings out the activist side of Tim Robbins (writer/director) and Susan Sarandon (lead role). The film pulls no punches in its brutish depiction of the death penalty in the United States. But the film never falls into the easy didacticism that would snare lesser filmmakers.

Dead Man Walking depicts the experiences of counseling death-row inmates recounted by Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., in her book *Dead Man Walking* (Random House, 1993). Her time with inmates on Louisiana's death row took her into the lives of murder victims' families and the families of convicted men who died while she watched. The film takes a sympathetic stand toward the families that cannot reconcile themselves to their children's deaths. It also spends time with the convicted man's family, who now watch their son and brother die.

The most moving aspect of the film, though, is the growth of a spiritual mentor-student relationship between Sister Prejean and convicted killer Matthew Poncelet (Sean Penn). In the long counseling sessions in the days and hours before death, the film ceases to be only about the death penalty and raises questions about the meaning of death, repentance and reconciliation. Those questions form a bond between the viewer and the soon-to-die Poncelet, who becomes more and more human in our eyes, even though the horror of his crime is never diminished.

The brutal honesty with which that crime is presented on screen is difficult to watch and may turn away some viewers. But the depiction of violence fits the goal of presenting the complexity of the death penalty with integrity.

The film is also about Prejean's spiritual growth. Her privileged upbringing and her work among the poor did not prepare her for her work with Poncelet. We walk alongside her as she comes to terms with the threat of the killer, the inhumanity of the prisons, the hurt of the victims and the hatred of society.

Dead Man Walking is exhausting. Throughout the film the audience is weighted by the question of how to understand the injustice portrayed. This is, after all, our society on screen. Advocates of the death penalty will be confronted with the question of who bears responsibility for the condemned man's death. Opponents will face the question of how can we live in a society so cruel and inhumane. The film does not give either side an answer.

BOOKS

A GOD OF VENGEANCE

God's Wrathful Children: Political Oppression and Christian Ethics *by Willa Boesak (Eerdmans, 1995, 264 pages)*

Reviewed by Judy Zimmerman Herr, Lancaster, Pa.

Reconciliation and forgiveness are hotly debated subjects in many parts of the world. In countries that have recently suffered civil war or where there is a history of human rights violations, governments and churches struggle with how to punish and how to forgive.

Willa Boesak, a lecturer in theological ethics and brother of well-known church leader and politician Allan Boesak, poses these questions in the context of South Africa's history and recent change of government. His answer is a theology of vengeance, which takes into account Jesus' command to love the enemy and forgive, while also recognizing the wrath of God against the evildoer.

Boesak begins by summarizing South Africa's history from the point of view of the majority of black South Africans. It is a history of dispossession. Boesak's brief treatment also indicts the Christian churches for their

FRIESLAND TO GDANSK

A Special Menno Simons
500th Anniversary Eastward Tour
(Amsterdam, Friesland, Hamburg,
Bad Oldesloe, Gdansk and Berlin)

July 15 - 26, 1996 Leader: John L. Ruth

All our 1996 European tours feature this special 500th anniversary.

Menno Simons 500th Anniversary Tour .... June 10 - 26
European Fall Harvest .... September 26 - October 11

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure
or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624

1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

dismissal of African culture and their acquiescence in land theft. In this brief treatment of South African history, Boesak focuses on the resistance offered by traditional societies and traces the history of protests. He suggests that both practically and theologically the focus of justice must be on restoration of the land.

As a way of giving background for a theology of vengeance, Boesak goes into three fairly detailed case studies from history: the Zealots of first-century Palestine, Thomas Muntzer and the German Peasant Wars, and African-American activist Malcolm X. Here it would have been helpful to have more parallels drawn to the South African reality Boesak wants to speak to.

Finally, Boesak returns to the question of a theology of God's vengeance. He suggests that Jesus' command to forgive enemies must be read in the context of Jewish legal tradition, in which God's vengeance toward the wrongdoer happens through the courts of law rather than through personal acts of revenge. Thus, Jesus does not negate the possibility of punishment for wrongdoers. Enemy-love, Boesak suggests, does not cancel punishment for misdeeds.

Boesak joins the question for forgiveness to that of restitution. Black people in South Africa must be called on to forgive, but only when their oppressors take steps to right historical wrongs. Repentance must be signified by some act of restitution. This may include restoration of land and other reparations. If past crimes are not dealt with, a constructive future will not be possible.

Boesak's book was originally written as a Ph.D. thesis, and at times it reads that way. He assumes knowledge of South African history, and does not always do well at tying together various sections. Mennonite readers will find Boesak's call for an ethic of vengeance shocking at first, and far from our historic emphasis on reconciliation. Boesak claims that an ethic of vengeance is essentially pastoral, because a healing process for the people and the country is impossible without penitence from those who committed acts of violence against the majority of the people.

Boesak's book is written first for South Africans, especially for those who feel anger against their former oppressors. It can help us get some sense of the rage he is responding to, even though we may not find his formulation of God as wrathful vengeance-seeker helpful.

BIBLE: HISTORY OR STORY

Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus *by John Dominic Crossan (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, 231 pages)*

Reviewed by C. Norman Kraus, Harrisonburg, Va.

This book is carefully crafted, but for me ultimately unsatisfying. Crossan asks how much of the New Testament Passion stories are actual history, and decides that very few of the reported events actually took place. The book, he writes, "is about the accuracy and honesty of Christian scholarship in its best reconstruction of those ancient yet ever-present events." Or again, "Here is the question at the heart of my book. Jesus stands before a Roman governor who declares him innocent and wants him released while a Jewish crowd declares him guilty and wants him crucified. The crowd wins. Is that scene Roman history, or Christian propaganda?"

Crossan thinks the detailed events were shaped out of the messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. In his words they are "historicized prophecy" rather than a "remembered history." Most scholars think that they are remembered history interpreted and described in the words of such prophesies, for example, Psalm 2.

Crossan is convinced that the basic events of arrest, abuse and crucifixion are historical but that the original 12 disciples actually were not present at the trial and crucifixion and so knew little or nothing about what happened. When they became convinced that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the apostles assumed that he would have fulfilled the prophetic passages.

For the layperson unfamiliar with New Testament criticism, the book will be well nigh impossible to evaluate, even though the author has been careful to define terms and state his case with as few technicalities as possible.

Briefly, he assumes that the four canonical Gospels are composite texts written fairly late in the first century and that they are theological stories based upon other written and oral sources. He also argues that the non-canonical "Gospel of Peter," which most scholars think was written about 150 A.D., was probably written as early as 40 A.D., before any of the canonical Gospels, and was one of these sources.

Crossan is a Roman Catholic scholar and a convinced believer in Jesus Christ. He makes a sharp distinction between "revelation" and "reason," between theology and history. In his books on the life of Jesus he writes as a historian who is convinced that the church's theological interpretation of Jesus as the Christ is correct. But he is also convinced that theology cannot dictate what took place in history. As historian he also knows that first-century writers did not make this kind of distinction. They could and did sometimes write theology as history. Crossan has advanced a rigorous thesis and methodology for sorting out exactly what is "history" in our understanding of the term.

Resources

- **Loving God** by Eleanor Snyder and Susan Priest (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $32.95 U.S./$46.95 Cdn.), latest in the Living Stones collection, helps children age 3 to grade eight explore their relationship with God through prayer and action.
- **World Wide Web:** Information about General Conference Mennonite Church programs is now available on the World Wide Web. The home page can be accessed through http://www2.southwind.net:80/~gcmc.
- **Words for Worship**, edited by Arlene M. Mark (Herald Press, 1996, $15.95 U.S./$22.75 Cdn.), is a collection of worship resources, including pieces on community, peace and justice, service, adoration, atonement and reassurance.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 495
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Are we functional atheists?

God is an active presence. Yet we often act as though God doesn't exist. We become functional atheists. This begs the question, however, of how active God is. Further, then, how active are we to be?

Last Sunday I heard a sermon on Judges 6:1-32. This passage states a position that runs throughout the Scriptures, that God is in charge. Particularly in the Old Testament we find statements to the effect that God brings misfortune on Israel when it is unfaithful, and rescues Israel when it repents and turns back to God. This is the case in Judges, and the cycle repeats itself over and over: The Israelites do what is evil in the sight of the Lord, calamity follows, then God sends a judge to deliver them.

> *When we try to do what God requires on our own we are acting as atheists. However, believing in God's active presence does not mean that we are not active.*

Read almost anywhere in the Old Testament, and you see the same assumption: God is in control. I've been reading Genesis, and in the Joseph story, when Pharaoh says he has heard that Joseph interprets dreams, Joseph says, "It is not I; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer" (Genesis 41:16).

Our Sunday school class has been studying the Book of Ruth. Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, exemplifies the Hebrew attitude toward God's active presence when she says that "the Almighty has brought calamity upon me" (Ruth 1:21b).

The Psalms express passionate belief in God, either anger at suffering injustice or exultant praise. But you do not find apathy or atheism. Job argues about why he has suffered misfortune, but he does not doubt God's active presence.

Last Sunday's sermon challenged us to not try to see God's presence only in the good things that happen but to see God in charge of all things. Get angry, if you want, but don't become apathetic or unbelieving.

I don't fully agree with the speaker because I believe God has chosen to allow the creation a certain freedom. How much freedom, however, is a mystery I don't pretend to know.

Discipleship: This raises a question about discipleship. We are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:5,8), and we walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). But what does this mean? How active is God's presence in our walk?

We are not automatons through whom God acts against our will. More than once in college I attended a Christian concert in which a performer said, "God gave me this song," implying that the performer didn't do anything. Although I know he meant well, I remember thinking, If that's true then God is a lousy songwriter.

This issue includes three "stories of grace" (pages 3-9). These people, while doing their best to follow Christ faithfully, found themselves—in various ways—at the ends of their ropes. They reached or recognized their limitations and found themselves in need of God's grace.

The truth is, we are always in need of God's grace. However, we don't always—or even often—recognize this reality. It often takes events, like an illness or burnout or fear, to wake us up to our dependence on God. And we often need each other to help us confess our need for God's grace and to accept it.

When we try to do what God requires on our own we are acting as atheists. However, believing in God's active presence does not mean that we are not active. It means that we do our best to be faithful yet depend on God for what comes of it. Discerning the difference between acting in faith and acting without faith is not always easy. We need the help of the Christian community.

A saying I heard years ago describes this dialectic of faithful responsibility and dependence on God: "It's important, but it really doesn't matter." Be faithful, but recognize God's grace. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 05
MARCH 12, 1996

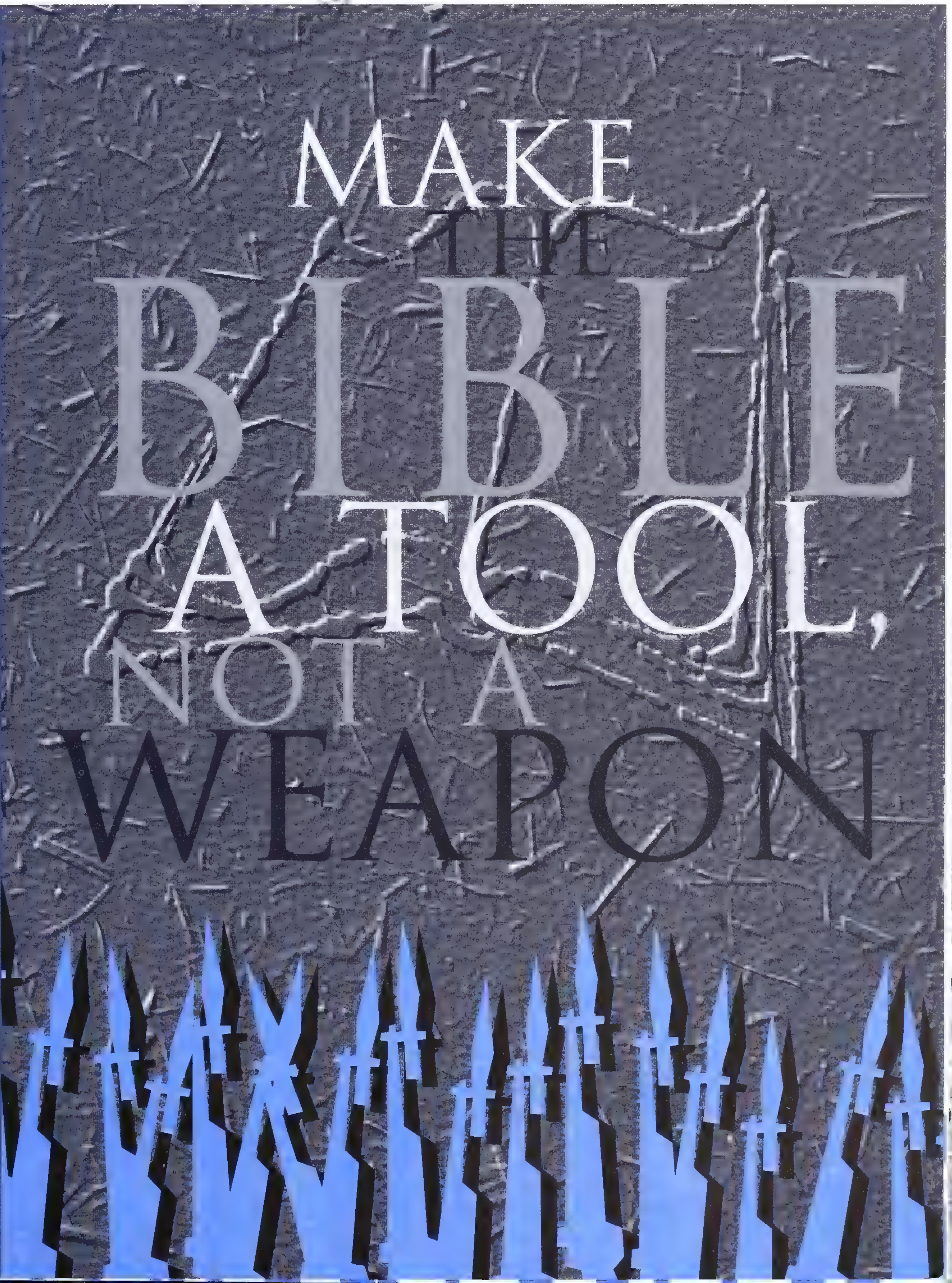
'96
ELKHART
LIBRARY

Inside

Welcome to Literal Church / p. 10

The myths of immigration / p. 11

We can learn a lot from Lot / p. 12



MAKE THE BIBLE A TOOL, NOT A WEAPON

- Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war (page 3)
- A book with the power to shake us up (page 6)
- Divine titles in the Bible (page 8)

Prologue

Our Confession of Faith calls the Bible "the essential book of the church." In this issue we look at the importance of the Bible for our faith and life together.

We live in mean-spirited times. Arthur Boers writes about the difficulty of being a pilgrim of peace in a culture at war (page 3). Anabaptists, he says, often fall between the liberal and conservative camps and thus may be mislabeled at times.

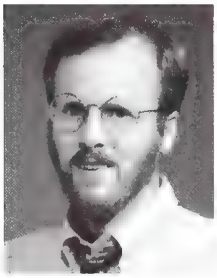
Carla Reimer writes about two Mennonites who are helping others in their congregations study the Bible (page 6).

Sit down sometime with a cup of coffee and do the crossword puzzle on page 8. Children may also enjoy this way of studying the Bible.

Some people boast about "taking the Bible literally." However, as Don Ratzlaff points out (page 10), few of us really do. When we recognize that, we may be able to address contentious issues in more constructive ways.

Columnist J.B. Miller looks at some myths about immigration (page 11) and calls us to act more compassionately.

Nathan Showalter provides a Bible study about Lot (page 12). Although originally written for missionaries, it has lessons for us all.



When this issue comes out, many General Conference leaders will be meeting in Newton, Kan., to set policy and goals. Please pray for them. *gh*

Next issue: Resurrection promises

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

Contents

FEATURES

3 Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war

How do we hold on to our convictions and show compassion?

6 A book with the power to shake us up

Two Mennonites talk about why in-depth Bible study is essential to them.

8 Divine titles in the Bible

An NIV crossword puzzle

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
10 Speaking out
11 Fiscal health
12 Bible
14 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. ©1996**

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Larry Penner

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail TheMennonite@gcmc.org

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

How do we hold on to our convictions and show compassion?

PILGRIM OF PEACE IN A CULTURE AT WAR

Arthur P. Boers

Occasionally I get hate mail, most of it from Christians. One nasty letter was even anonymously signed, "Yours Truly, a brother in Jesus."

Adult Sunday school material earns me the most poison-pen correspondence. In a 1 Corinthians 8 study I encouraged students to discuss whether those who abide by "long-held understandings of the Bible's opinions" on homosexuality were the "strong" or the "weak."

For that I received one of the hottest letters ever. The writer accused me of saying that the Bible is "merely a *book of opinions*" (his emphasis) and said that I "seem to have taken lightly the inspired Word of God." (He went on to make a number of spurious and unprintable accusations about Mennonite churches and their pastors.)

Rather than checking the meaning of "opinion," my correspondent attacked. The *Oxford American Dictionary* notes that "opinion" has several meanings, including "a judgment or comment given by an expert who is consulted." We all agree that in that sense the Bible does have opinions.

I was shocked by this letter, but church press editors tell me that such mean-spiritedness is commonplace in much church life today.

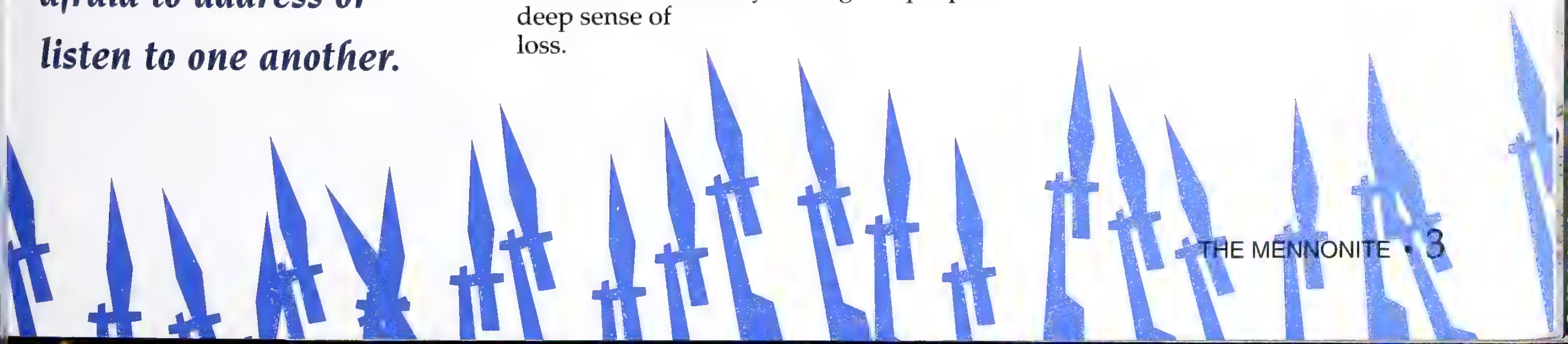
In *Culture Wars*, James Davison Hunter argues that we are wracked by fiercely divisive struggles over who will control culture. (Waco, Oklahoma City and violence against abortionists are the war's overtly violent manifestations.) Battles are fought in politics and denominations about abortion, homosexuality, prayer in schools, creationism and on and on.

Malice: People use war terminology to promote causes; they discredit opponents with what Hunter calls the "language and themes of malice." There is tremendous pressure to choose sides but little room for discussion. How can anyone respond calmly to being labeled "Nazi," "fascist," "eco-terrorist," "femi-Nazi," "baby killer," "homophobe," "heterosexist," "heretic," "pagan" or "New Age"?

This climate of fear even pervades denominations. Both liberals and conservatives are often afraid to address issues. (Paranoia about "political correctness" is also part of this picture.) When the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada had a workshop on homosexuality in January 1995, no one dared present a traditional point of view. Yet in the United States certain Mennonite churches and pastors are penalized by their conferences for holding nontraditional stances on the issue.

In culture wars, all sides are convinced that they are an oppressed minority. In this climate of suspicion, people are afraid to address or listen to one another. The intense feelings indicate deep fears. With the advent of pluralism and relativism, and the breakdown of traditional morality, we live with more and more uncertainty. This gives people a deep sense of loss.

In culture wars, all sides are convinced that they are an oppressed minority. In this climate of suspicion, people are afraid to address or listen to one another.



MAKE
THE
BIBLE
A TOOL,
NOT A
WEAPON

As Christ is Lord of the universe and all reality, Christian pilgrims need not fear truth from any source.

When the stakes feel high, conflicts intensify.

Hunter says culture wars are a contest between orthodoxy, a commitment "to an external, definable and transcendent authority," and progressivism, where truth is "viewed as a process, a reality that is ever unfolding."

I am orthodox in my high view of Scripture and agreement with the historical, ecumenical creeds. However, Hunter says that progressives promote ecumenicism, denominational cooperation and the social gospel, all of which are important to me. So am I progressive or orthodox?

Some believe the major divide in churches is between liberals and evangelicals. I consider myself evangelical, but vindictiveness uttered by evangelical Christians makes me shudder. I subscribe to and sometimes write for *Christianity Today*, the flagship of American evangelicalism; yet I often disagree with it. I also subscribe to and occasionally write for *Sojourners* and *The Other Side*. Both call themselves evangelical and are considered leftist. Yet they have opposite positions on abortion and homosexuality. What am I, then, evangelical or liberal?

Jesus posed a challenging alternative to all closed-minded, rigid thinking (liberal or conservative).

I am most influenced by curmudgeons who do not fit categories of left or right, evangelical or liberal, orthodox or progressive. Clarence Jordan was a Southern Baptist Bible-thumper who passionately opposed war, risked all for racial integration and founded a Christian commune. Will Campbell is a Baptist preacher from the South who works for civil rights, befriends Ku Klux Klan members, supports fully including homosexuals in church life and opposes abortion. (The most vindictive hate mail he ever received was from liberals because of his opposition to abortion.)

Jordan and Campbell, self-styled Anabaptists, remind us that we are an uncomfortable alternative to both evangelicals and liberals. Thus the Conference of Mennonites in Canada cannot decide whether to join the Canadian Council of Churches or the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. We have commonalities and differences with both.

Theological spectrum: Some speculate that once the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church integrate, a split into conservative-liberal denominations is inevitable. That prospect grieves me. I am enriched, nurtured and challenged by Christians all along the theological spectrum; I see God move among "orthodox" and "progressives" alike. I refuse to take sides.

Two new books offer alternatives: *True to You: Living Our Faith in a Multi-Minded World* by Donald Posterski and *Cease Fire: Searching for Sanity in America's Culture Wars* by Tom Sine (see the review in the Jan. 23 issue of *The Mennonite)* are evangelical calls to tolerant patience. They pose hopeful directions amid culture wars. (Others, like Tony Campolo, also give good guidance.)

Blaise Pascal said a great person is not at any extreme but touches both at once. Jesus was such a person. At times he sounded right-leaning-conservative-orthodox ("I have come not to abolish the law") and other times like a left-leaning-progressive ("new wine is put into fresh wineskins").

He offended everyone along the theological-political spectrum. All political and religious leaders and institutions conspired in his death. The conservative Pharisees and liberal Sadducees passionately despised and loathed one another. They agreed on only one thing, that Jesus should die.

Jesus posed a challenging alternative to all closed-minded, rigid thinking. Posterski argues that Jesus is our prototype for dealing with diversity, citing Jesus' response to the adulterous woman in John 8. There Jesus de-escalates an emotionally-charged, potentially explosive situation by having people deal with themselves rather than focus on others. He protects the vulnerable and "embraces both conviction and compassion." He does not condemn the woman but saves and protects her, calling her to live without sin. This is a good model for us.

When people questioned Jesus and tried to force him to take sides, he turned things about by asking them questions. Ched Myers in *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?* argues that Jesus is only our Lord insofar as we allow him to challenge us, keeping us off-balance. If we take him seriously, then

Even when they disagree, Christians should share the same position.

RNS

we honor the questions he has for all of us.

Wheat and weeds: This means being pilgrims, not crusaders. Alan Jones (in *Passion for Pilgrimage*) says that pilgrims must "be prepared to find out that they are … wrong. They must entertain the idea all the time, so that they are constantly available to greater light." Pilgrims do not divide the world or the church into good and evil, right and wrong. The parable of the wheat and the weeds shows that the struggle between righteousness and wickedness is waged primarily in our own hearts, not between people.

Pilgrims respect others because they trust Jesus. Donald McCullough, a Presbyterian pastor, says, "What the church most needs … is renewed trust in the lordship of Jesus Christ. When this truth … works its way into our emotional center of gravity, we will be released from the awful burdens of defending God's honor. Instead we may be what the Lord called us to be—witnesses who joyfully point to what we have seen and heard."

Pilgrims look at themselves first. A poster showing someone kneeling reads, "Even when they disagree, Christians should share the same position. When there's disagreement, there's reason for prayer because in the humble search for God's answers we may find understanding. So before you take a stand for what you believe, spend some time on your knees."

Pilgrims listen to others. We do not denounce, deride, call names, attack, cast aspersions or invent labels. We need dialogue, not diatribe. This is not just a liberal ideal. As Hunter notes, liberals claim to love dialogue but seldom do it with conservatives.

People who love Jesus—and people whom Jesus loves—do not need to bash each other. We can admit the godliness and piety of those with whom we disagree. We can listen to how others understand the Bible and admit when it is done with integrity. While other people's ideas may be our enemies, other people are not our targets.

Stephen Carter writes in *The Culture of Disbelief*, "What is needed … is a willingness to listen, not because the speaker has the right voice but because the speaker has the right to speak. Moreover, the willingness to listen must hold out the possibility that the speaker is saying something worth listening to; to do less is to trivialize the forces that shape the moral convictions of tens of millions." As Christ is Lord of the universe and all reality, Christian pilgrims need not fear truth from any source.

At times I am discouraged about the tension in our faith communities, but I am also hopeful. Part of my hope derives from history.

Struggles between those who stress holiness, purity, separation and doctrinal correctness and those who emphasize love, tolerance, inclusiveness and open-mindedness are found throughout Mennonite history.

I am intrigued by parallel struggles in Dutch history. In the 17th century, liberal-conservative tensions between the Lamists and the Zonists overshadowed earlier ethnic divisions. Meanwhile, the Waterlanders felt that there were several ways of being Mennonite. They did not consider themselves the only true Mennonites. (Mennonites in Groningen did not even recognize the baptisms of other Mennonite congregations.) Waterlanders allowed people of other denominations in their Communion and did not demand that Reformed people be rebaptized.

Pretty fierce divisions, but by the early 19th century these groups were united everywhere throughout the country.

Dogmatic divisiveness: When our spiritual ancestor Hans Denck "recanted," he confessed his distaste for dogmatic divisiveness. He disliked disagreeing with other Christians. He rejected dogmatism, sectarianism and divisiveness. "Thus," writes historian Werner Packull, "through his life and thought Denck became an advocate of toleration, not because of indifference to religious truth or social justice, but because of his concern for them."

The challenge is to live and apply those past learnings today.

Kathleen Norris tells a charming story in *Dakota*. (Norris, a Presbyterian, writes about Roman Catholics, perhaps itself a parable of all we can learn from each other.) Benedictine nuns in the Philippines were divided as to how to behave during the revolt against the Marcos regime. Younger sisters joined protests. Other sisters considered this improper. So the community met, beginning and ending with prayer. Everyone spoke; they decided that some sisters would continue their protests, others would give food and medical assistance to protesters, and "those who disapproved would pray for everyone." A young nun said, "If one of the conservative sisters was praying that we young, crazy ones would come to our senses and stay off the streets, that was OK. We were still a community."

May we all move from being cultural crusaders to being Christ's pilgrims.

Arthur Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Two Mennonites talk about why in-depth Bible study is essential to them.

A BOOK WITH THE POWER TO SHAKE US UP

Carla Reimer

As a child, Jack Dyck often wished he could stay at home on Sunday evenings and watch Walt Disney on television. But like it or not, he always ended up attending church every Sunday at 7 p.m., at the insistence of his parents.

His parents' influence extended far beyond his childhood. During his university days, Jack says, he "rebelled" and stopped attending church regularly. Upon graduating with a bachelor's degree in history and German, he decided he wanted to travel in Europe.

It was then that his parents stepped in and convinced him to enroll in a Bible school in Switzerland. He followed their advice and, as a result, he recommitted his life to Christ.

"My parents modeled what they believed. It was clear that Christianity was about more than simply picking up the facts," Jack says. "They were passionate about their faith."

Today, as pastor of the 560-member St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, Jack is thankful his parents held to their high standards. He finds he likes to start each day with an hour of prayer and Bible study. "It gives me the inspiration and direction I need," he says.

Danielle Goering was also influenced by her upbringing. "I grew up in the old-fashioned system where commitment to church came first and the rewards followed," she says. "There never was a question about whether we would go to church on Sunday."

She belongs to the approximately 60-member First Mennonite Church, Phoenix, Ariz., where she serves as one of the teachers for the Sunday school class that uses the *Adult Bible Study Guide*.

Danielle feels that people who don't participate in regular Bible study are missing out. "The fellowship we have with other Christians helps us define what we're about and directs our life in the church," she says, noting that about 12 adults, ages 40 to 80, attend the Bible study class.

"As a child, you learn the individual Bible stories. But as an adult, the more

"As a child, you learn the individual Bible stories. But as an adult, the more you study the Bible, the more you realize how much is there for you—how it all fits together for your life."

Danielle Goering

"Our entire being and doing should be derived from the Word of God. ... The Bible has the power to shake us up."

Jack Dyck

you study the Bible, the more you realize how much is there for you—how it all fits together for your life," Danielle says.

At the St. Catharines Church, Jack has noticed the following about people's views of Bible study: "Choice and flexibility tend to be important to younger adults. They don't want someone telling them what to read. They decide what they want to read based on the recommendations of their peers. They like to see a direct application of the Bible in their daily life."

Those who are older "tend to see the Bible as their primary source for meeting their needs. They like using the biblical text," Jack says. "They don't mind getting into exegesis, whereas the younger group is impatient about getting to the heart of the material."

He estimates that about 40 percent of the English-speaking members teach or participate in Sunday school. Worship services and other activities at the St. Catharines Church are held in German and English.

"Christian education is fundamental to the life, vitality and growth of a church. We haven't done a good enough job of passing on the faith," he says.

Care-giving: In order to encourage more members to be actively involved, the St. Catharines Church is quadrupling its number of deacons over a five-year period. "Our care-giving is weak and it has affected many areas," he says. "If we want to get more people to attend Sunday school, we have to first show that we care."

"It still comes to an individual's willingness to get out of bed on Sunday morning. Some people prefer the immediate benefit of sleeping another two hours," says Danielle. "Since that kind of commitment doesn't automatically occur in today's society, the church needs to find ways to encourage people to make that commitment."

"Every generation has to make the Bible their own. The Bible has to come alive for them," says Jack. "Our entire being and doing should be derived from the Word of God. It keeps us on track as Christians in terms of justice and peace issues. It convicts us of our wrong, individually and corporately. The Bible has the power to shake us up."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Be willing to do the work

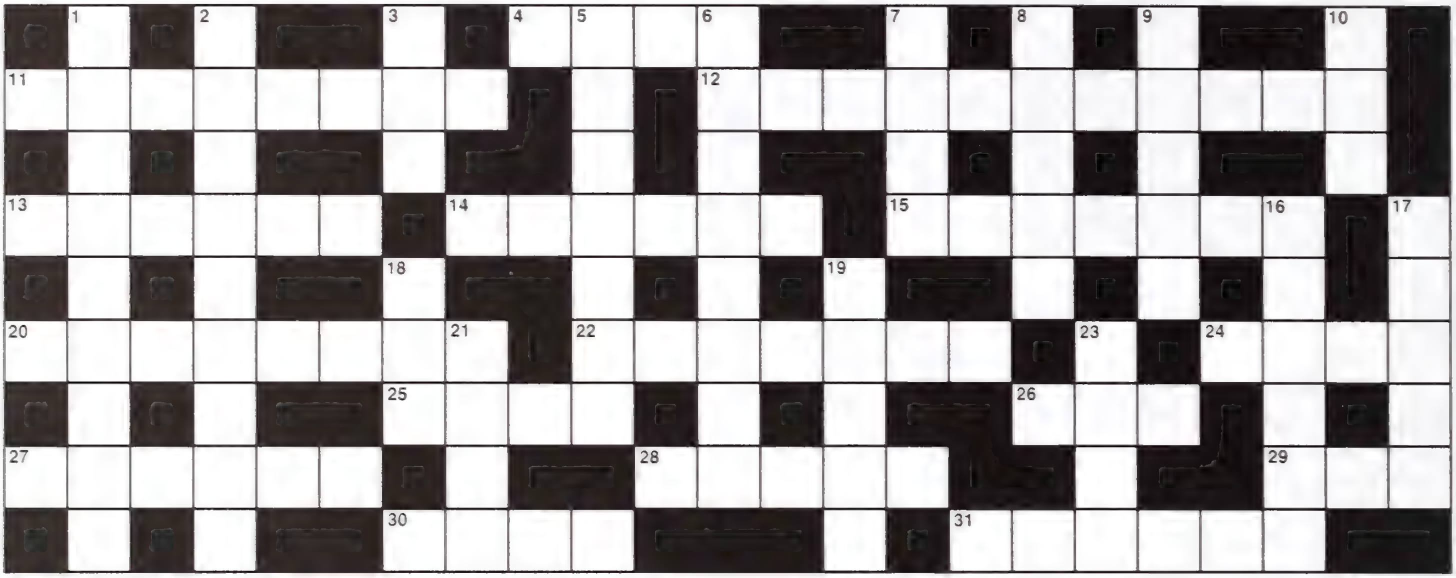
To trust the Bible, to let it define our world and provide a language for thinking about the world, can transform our lives. But it does not make understanding the Bible easy. We have to get down to hard work—to reading the Bible and immersing ourselves in its world and its language. We need to know the Bible well enough so that, as was true for Augustine or Luther or Calvin, one passage reminds us of another that offers a qualification, another that provides support, another that sets out a different frame of reference.

Such immersion in the biblical world and its language leads to much richer interpretation than either quoting proof texts or picking and choosing passages we like. When we really know the Bible, we realize its complexities, its diversities, its ambiguities. One of our problems these days, whether we are "liberals" or "fundamentalists," is how few of us can do that. Fundamentalists quote a single proof text to settle the matter, and liberals can't remember any passages at all. If we are to get beyond such a state of affairs, we will have to study the Bible much more seriously. But if we believe the Bible is true, if we really trust it, we ought to be willing to do the work.

William C. Placher in Christian Century*, Oct. 11, 1995, quoted in* Context *(Dec. 15, 1995)*

DIVINE TITLES IN THE BIBLE

An NIV *crossword puzzle* (*see answers below*)

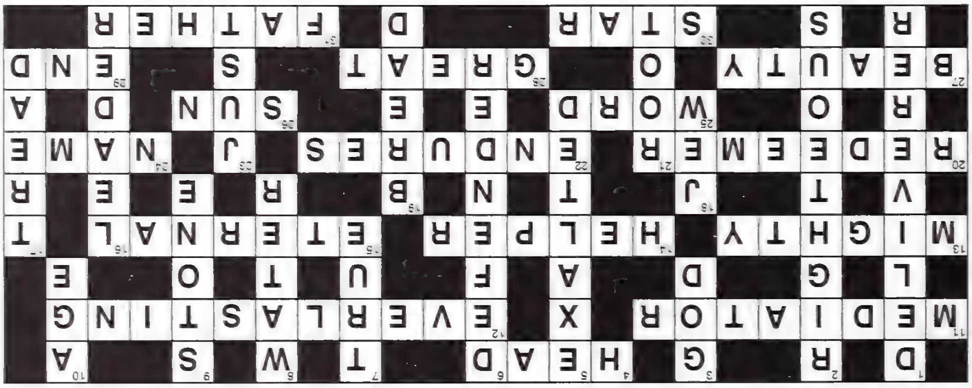


ACROSS

4. We will in all things grow up into him who is the _____. (Ephesians 4:15)
11. Jesus is this of a new covenant. (Hebrews 12:24)
12. The Son will be called what kind of Father? (Isaiah 9:6)
13. The Child will be called this God. (Isaiah 9:6)
14. David called God this. (Psalm 118:7)
15. Abraham called him this kind of God. (Genesis 21:33)
20. In the end, he will stand upon the earth. (Job 19:25)
22. The Lord's name does this forever. (Psalm 135:13)
24. The Lord said his _____ would be great among the nations. (Malachi 1:11)
25. This is God. (John 1:1)
26. He will rise with healing in his wings. (Malachi 4:2)
27. God shines forth, perfect in this. (Psalm 50:2)
28. He was called this kind of shepherd. (Hebrews 13:20)
29. Jesus called himself this. (Revelation 21:6)
30. God is called the Morning what? (Revelation 22:16)
31. We all have one. (Malachi 2:10)

DOWN

1. He will come from Zion. (Romans 11:26)
2. John called Jesus the _____ One. (1 John 2:1)
3. In the beginning. (Genesis 1:1)
5. The Lord's name alone is this. (Psalm 148:13)
6. He is strong for the fatherless. (Proverbs 23:11)
7. The rider on the white horse is called this. (Revelation 19:11)
8. The Lord called himself this. (Jeremiah 2:13)
9. Rejected by men, chosen by God. (1 Peter 2:4)
10. Christ is above every title in the present _____. (Ephesians 1:21)
16. God is with us; he is our _____. (2 Chronicles 13:12)
17. God will _____ our sins underfoot. (Micah 7:19)
18. The woman at the well called Jesus a _____. (John 4:9)
19. Jesus called himself the what of life? (John 6:48)
21. Jesus called himself this, of David. (Revelation 22:16)
23. God is this; he will pay back trouble to those who trouble you. (2 Thessalonians 1:6)



Letters

A TROUBLING CHALLENGE

The article by James Samuel Logan in the Jan. 9 issue (page 3) was profound and inspiring. James eloquently characterizes the struggle for identity and community for our historic peace church within the fragmented racial contexts within which we find ourselves. He demonstrates a deep commitment and genuine compassion for personal lives and the wider Mennonite Church.

Yet his message presents a troubling challenge for the wider Mennonite church and its ability to identify with and relate to others within our home communities. Is our role one of an isolated church that feels good unto itself, or one that can truly identify with society around us? His keen insights extend far beyond racial fragmentation and differentiation, which the church may find hard to relate to. They in fact extend equally to a variety of "diverse histories, cultures and experiences," including the ills of modern society. We may not feel comfortable connecting with those experiencing these classic realities. But who are we as a peace church if we continue to build barriers and can't relate to those who are different from our ideal? If our challenge is to convert them to the social values of our "ideal" middle-class America, it is perhaps no wonder that our church rolls dwindle and we seem increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. Perhaps our challenge should be having understanding and compassion for the realities of individuals' lives within our communities that incorporate "the loving, suffering and triumphant Christ of history." *Rich Miller, Wooster, Ohio*

NO MORE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

I read with some interest that new on the horizon is a theology of stewardship for Mennonite churches. What is that going to do to improve our stewardship? Another academic exercise trying to tell me what I should do and don't do? Sorry, I think you are barking up the wrong tree. Our people are a generous and giving people when they get excited about an issue or event. Witness the giving to Mennonite Central Committee when there is need at home or abroad, or the giving of self and resources to the cause of Mennonite Disaster Service when disaster strikes. The list goes on.

We don't need more "papers." We need to have our attention grabbed by what the conference is doing. What difference have our missionaries made? What difference has our youth ministry made? What difference has our Commission on Education made with the new Jubilee series (one of the very best Sunday school materials available)?

Somehow, in the past few decades we have come to think that paper can replace people, that if we write a theological article instead of a human interest story, it somehow has more validity. We have come to worship at the altar of the Baals, in this case especially the altar of low administrative overhead. Sure it costs money to have missionaries itinerate, sure it's hard on them, especially if there are children involved. Perhaps that can be balanced by extending the furlough or North American assignment time somewhat. Perhaps we can find ways and means of getting some of our retirees to spend some time in telling the story of what the conference is doing, for that matter maybe some of our younger people would also be interested in such a challenge. What we need to do is rekindle our amazement, our awe, our wonder and our awareness of what God has done for us in and through the person of Jesus, whom we call Lord and Savior. All the "theologies," LIFE programs, etc., will make no difference until that happens. *Jake Nickel, Saskatoon*

DOING WHAT IS RIGHT

I wish to compliment you and your staff for the excellent Feb. 13 issue of *The Mennonite.*

I am a 76-year-old, life-long member of the Trenton (Ohio) Mennonite Church. I still work at developing my religious beliefs and practices. Sometimes in the past few years, reading *The Mennonite* greatly bothered me. The petty arguments about what the Bible says or does not say can lead people to discard Christianity. We can all find peace in just doing what we know is right.

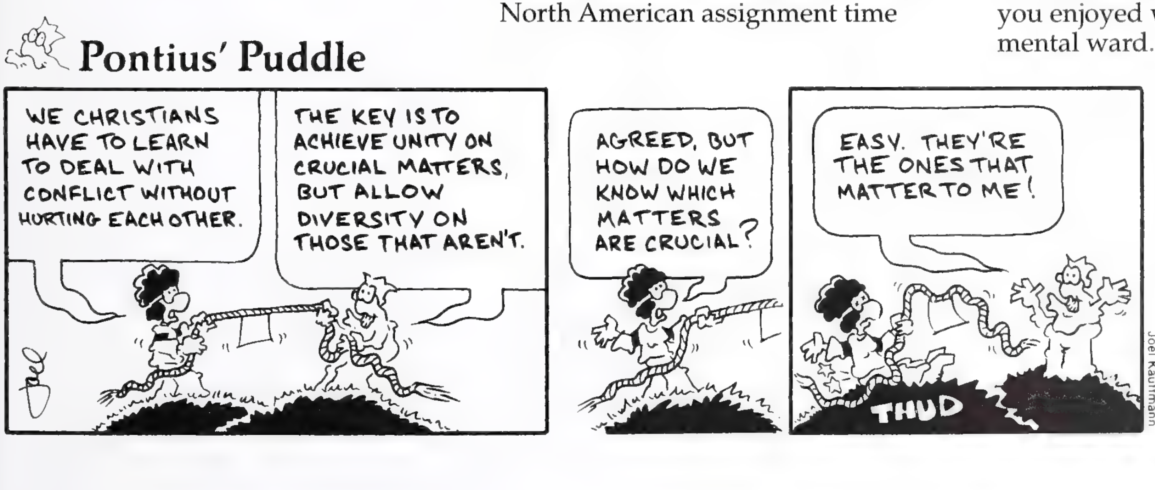
Again, I really appreciated the excellent articles on Lent. Keep up the good work. *Clifford Kennel, Trenton, Ohio*

LAUGHTER IS HEALING

Two articles in the December 1995 issues stood out for me. I loved the story "Our Barroom Christmas" (Dec. 12 issue, page 3). Oh that we all could present Christ to the hurting ones around us as naturally as that pastor.

And to Jan Eitzen, author of "I Don't Belong Here" (Dec. 26 issue, page 3), I loved your article, too. And yes, I would like to hear about the laughter you enjoyed while a patient on the mental ward. I could feel your pain, as my family has suffered similarly. Laughter, along with much prayer and love, is healing. *Jane Herstine Friesen, Phoenix*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request.*


Pontius' Puddle
WE CHRISTIANS HAVE TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT WITHOUT HURTING EACH OTHER.
THE KEY IS TO ACHIEVE UNITY ON CRUCIAL MATTERS, BUT ALLOW DIVERSITY ON THOSE THAT AREN'T.
AGREED, BUT HOW DO WE KNOW WHICH MATTERS ARE CRUCIAL?
EASY. THEY'RE THE ONES THAT MATTER TO ME!
THUD
Joel Kauffmann

Welcome to Literal Church

Reading the Bible in context will help us talk about contentious issues.

Don Ratzlaff

The Bible, particularly the New Testament, is our source for both doctrine and lifestyle. What does the Bible say? has been one of the first questions we ask when issues arise in our congregational life.

But how do we answer such a question? It's not that hard, some reply. Read the words and do what they say. Simple enough. Or is it? What would congregational life look like if indeed we did heed the actual words and commands of the New Testament?

In that vein, welcome to "Literal Church"

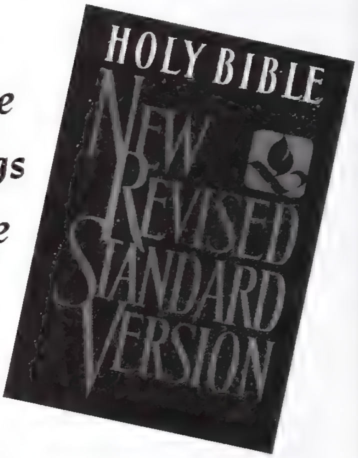
- where members greet each other with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16) and regularly wash each other's feet (John 13:14);
- where the believers claim no possessions as their own but share everything they have; those who own land or houses sell them and give the money to the church (Acts 4:32-35);
- where the members show no partiality to rich people (James 2:1-9) but take collections for the poor (1 Corinthians 16:1) and give to anyone who asks of them (Matthew 5:42);
- where the Lord's Supper is regularly observed with a single cup (Mark 14:23) and unleavened bread (Luke 22:13,19);
- where members attend church on Saturday (Acts 13:14,42,44) and meet in homes for church (Colossians 4:15);
- where everyone is encouraged to speak in tongues and prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:5);
- where believers have fixed hours of prayer (Acts 3:1), lift their hands when they pray (1 Timothy 2:8) but avoid praying in public (Matthew 6:5-6);
- where faithful believers gouge out their eyes and cut off their hands if those body parts cause them to sin (Matthew 5:29-30);
- where clergy must be circumcised (Acts 16:3) and self-employed (2 Thessalonians 3:7-8);
- where preachers are sent in pairs (Mark 6:7);
- where the congregation selects its officers by casting lots (Acts 1:26) and has only seven deacons (Acts 6:3);
- where no widow can be enrolled for church assistance unless she is older than 60, has been faithful to her husband, and is well-known for her good deeds (1 Timothy 5:9-10);
- where women never teach men (1 Timothy 2:12) and in fact are silent whenever the church is gathered (1 Corinthians 14:35);
- where the heads of women are either covered or bald (1 Corinthians 11:6) and wives do not wear braided hair, gold jewelry or fine clothes (1 Peter 3:3);
- where men and women do not seek marriage (1 Corinthians 7:26-27);
- where members make no purchases on credit (Romans 13:8);
- where members work with their hands (1 Thessalonians 4:11) and if they will not work they are not allowed to eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

Does Literal Church sound much like yours? Frankly, it doesn't accurately describe the congregation I attend or any I know about. Does that mean we are not operating biblically? Does it mean the words of Scripture are not important to us? Not necessarily. Rather, we would say the vast majority of the above commands were given to address a specific situation in a specific place and time or to illustrate a broader, timeless principle that transcends place and time.

It sounds spiritually correct to say faithful Christians should not allow culture to influence biblical interpretation. But I say it must be considered and, consciously or unconsciously, is considered by all Bible-reading Christians. Every one of us draws lines in the sand between what we discern to be temporary and permanent teachings of the Bible. The challenge we face is deciding together, with the help of Spirit-filled Bible scholars, where to draw those lines—and then to live faithfully according to the light we have received.

That Scripture is time- and culture-related is no new truth. But it is that simple admission that I find missing sometimes as we debate contentious issues like women in leadership. Some characterize the debate as choosing between the teaching of Scripture or the pressures of our culture. In truth, the struggle is understanding how the former speaks to the latter, what first-century instruction means on the doorstep of the 21st century.

> ***Every one of us draws lines in the sand between what we discern to be temporary and permanent teachings of the Bible. The challenge we face is deciding together, with the help of Spirit-filled Bible scholars, where to draw those lines.***



If we understand and admit that our task is to accept biblical instruction as permanently binding and translate it into contemporary cultural terms and practices, then we can talk about contentious issues graciously. Why? Because we will be united in our intent not to avoid obedience to God's Word but to ensure it.

Don Ratzlaff is editor of Christian Leader, *the U.S. Mennonite Brethren magazine, where this article first appeared.*

Fiscal health

The myths of immigration

We must advocate for the poor and powerless, and that includes immigrants.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

People debate the high cost that immigrants exact. Today's immigrants come from Mexico, Haiti, Eastern Europe, Asia and elsewhere. Some suggest they are costing us much more than previous waves of immigrants.

It seems everything is worse today than it used to be. We have the coldest winters, the hottest summers, the biggest floods, the longest droughts and more immigrants placing a financial burden on us than ever before. Or do we?

Some of us like to think that the immigrants of previous generations succeeded without the help of government, that they made it on their own, a feat that would make all of us proud. Today's immigrants, however, are often viewed as dependent on welfare, demanding the best in health care, clogging our schools and wreaking havoc—in other words, costing us billions of dollars.

Politicians would like us to believe that their (and our) ancestors made it on their own, without help from anyone, except maybe the church. But that perception is wrong.

Believing that the problem with immigrants is worse today than in previous times is incorrect. Furthermore, I can find no biblical basis for turning our backs on people in need, and that includes immigrants.

There is no denying that immigrants cost us money today, and in some areas social services are stretched. But consider this: In 1909 more than half of public welfare recipients in the United States were immigrant families. New arrivals were three times more likely to be on public welfare than were citizens. In Chicago, two-thirds of welfare recipients were foreign born, and when considering their children, 80 percent of welfare recipients were immigrants.

Health care did not escape either. At the turn of the century, one-third of patients in public hospitals and mental institutions were foreign-born. These pressures on the health system did not go unnoticed. The president of the New York Board of Health complained that almost half of the spending at city hospitals went to treat the immigrant poor. This represents a huge disparity from today, when only about 6.5 percent of all Medicaid recipients are immigrants.

At the turn of the century, schools and educational structures were particularly threatened since education was seen as the vehicle to escape poverty and the public welfare system. In the United States' 30 largest cities, more than half the students in public schools were from immigrant families. In New York City the percentage approached 75 percent, and in Chicago it was more that two-thirds. Can you imagine the fuss if half or even one-third of the students in the school systems of Newton, Kan., Goshen, Ind., or Winnipeg were immigrant children? Today in the United States, less than 6 percent of the children in public schools are from immigrant families.

Before we fall into the trap of believing the immigrant "problem" is worse today than it ever has been, let's make sure we know the facts.

The complaint that many of today's immigrants are taking our jobs is even more ludicrous. Today's immigrant is often a low-skilled worker filling jobs that no one else wants. While not that much different from the low-skilled immigrants of the turn of the century, they are different from the immigrants who came after World Wars I and II. Because immigration was more difficult then, those who did make it to North America often represented Europe's intelligentsia fleeing Nazism, Communism and the wars wracking the continent. At the time, Europeans were wringing their hands about this "brain drain."

Studies have shown that it takes, on average, between three and four generations for immigrants to reach parity with native-born citizens. That's how long it takes for someone to be on an equal economic playing field with people whose ancestors have been here for generations.

The type of person immigrating is always a subject of political debate. During the Mariel boatlift from Cuba in 1980, Castro was accused of emptying his country's jails and mental hospitals. The same complaint was heard 100 years earlier from the New York State Board of Charities, which accused Europe of sending its "blind, idiotic, crippled, epileptic, lunatic and other infirm paupers, incapable of supporting themselves."

This kind of complaining is nothing new. Most disturbing of all, however, is reading about Benjamin Franklin, who griped in the late 1700s that the new German arrivals in Pennsylvania would not fit in. Could they have been my relatives he was complaining about? They arrived here about that time.

Before we fall into the trap of believing the immigrant "problem" is worse today than it ever has been, let's make sure we know the facts. Many of us have researched our family histories and know when our ancestors arrived in Canada or the United States. While many of them may not have been on public welfare, they did have the support of the church and family—something often not available to the immigrants of today. As Christians we are required to advocate for the poor and the powerless. For us, that includes the immigrant. The first step to advocacy may be to remove the myths surrounding the problem.

We can learn a lot from Lot

A *meditation on Genesis* 18:20-33

Nathan Showalter

Lot was in trouble. He thought he'd made a good choice, a land with water, trees, grass and cities nearby. In fact, the cities were so attractive that Lot had given up living in tents and had moved into town, into the city of Sodom. Lot knew there were problems there. A growing crime rate, excessive sex and violence, juvenile delinquency, a general breakdown of family life. But Lot thought it was possible to avoid the problems, to enjoy easy living in the city without getting polluted by the sins of the city.

Lot was in trouble, but he didn't know it. He had grown accustomed to the good life in town. It was so much more convenient than moving from one place to another, living in tents, not knowing for sure where you'd be a month from now. In fact, Lot had grown so comfortable with life in Sodom that he had given up the disciplines of prayer and worship that his Uncle Abraham had taught him. He needed that when he was getting ready for the big move, and maybe during the transition, when he was going through culture shock. But once he settled down, life became more predictable. He thought he didn't need to keep in touch with God all that often.

Lot was in a lot of trouble. Sodom, the town where he was living, was due for a major disaster. But Lot didn't know it because he wasn't talking to God much these days.

We joke about sin. You've heard the "I-died-and-went-to-heaven" stories. I died and went to heaven. St. Peter met me when I arrived at the pearly gates. He had a piece of chalk in his hand.

"Before you get settled in here in heaven," he said, "we need an account of your sins. Write down every sin that you've ever committed. When you need more space on the chalkboard, you can use this ladder." St. Peter handed me a box of chalk.

I looked at the ladder that ascended up, up and away, out of sight against a chalkboard that seemed as high and wide as heaven itself.

Ladder: I began carefully listing my sins. And I was soon climbing the ladder to find more space for the catalog of my indiscretions. As I was working my way up the ladder, I looked up and saw a figure high above me, coming down the ladder. Before long he was right above me, and I needed to make room for him to pass.

It was our mission director. We exchanged greetings.

"Are you finished already?" I asked.

"No," he said. "I'm going down for another box of chalk."

We joke about sin, but sin is no laughing matter. We laugh about it sometimes because it is a painful subject that can easily make us cry. We also laugh at sin because it has a funny side to it.

> ***With the cultural mixing that goes on in the modern global village, maintaining moral values may be more difficult than it has ever been.***

I'm reminded of the story of a Jewish father who took his little boy to the ritual bath for the first time. When they jumped into the pool the little boy began to shiver with cold and cried, "Oy, Papa, oy!" His father led him out of the pool, rubbed him down with a towel and dressed him. "Ahh, Papa, ahh!" purred the little fellow, tingling with pleasant warmth.

"Isaac," said the father thoughtfully, "do you want to know the difference between a cold bath and sin? When you jump into a cold pool you first yell oy, and then you say ahh. But when you commit a sin you first say ahh, and then you yell oy."

Lot was attracted to Sodom because it seemed like a comfortable place to live. It was a fun city. Only later did he realize that his desire for comfort and pleasure, not a wrong desire in and of itself, had led him to ignore the growing evil in the city.

Although at first inviting, sin is the sworn enemy of joy and happiness and wholeness. A conspiracy from the dark side, sin is always deceitful. It can become even more tricky for missionaries, people who live in two cultures at the same time. What is vice in one culture may be a virtue in another. A resounding after-dinner belch in one country may be a compliment to the cook; in another it is rude. A tactful way of saying something in one culture may in another seem like telling a lie. A smartly dressed woman in Taipei would be outrageously immodest in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Some Western courtship practices seem immoral in cultures where parents choose the marriage partner.

Missionaries who move from one culture to another may see these differences, and may wonder whether there are any absolute standards at all. Maybe everything is relative. It is possible that Lot was willing to justify the behavior of his neighbors in Sodom because their culture was different. Missionaries sometimes become confused as to what is right and what is wrong. They adopt a part of the foreign culture that gives them more freedom, while failing to see or ignoring the elements of the new culture that would provide discipline and restraint.

Sexual morality: If you finish reading the story of Lot, you will discover that Lot was so oblivious to what was going on around him that the angel had to almost force him to leave the city. Later, after they had escaped the destruction of the city, Lot's daughters became confused about sexual morality in the home. This could have been the result of their having accepted some immoral practices of Sodom. Or they may have been imitating local practices without understanding them completely.

In spite of Abraham's skillful and aggressive bargaining with God, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, wiped out in some kind of fiery volcanic explosion. Apparently there

continued on page 13

MARCH 1996

a Common Place

WHERE WE MEET
IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

1995 In Review

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Annual Report

The mission of Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee is an agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.

MCC seeks to demonstrate God's love through committed women and men who work among people suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural disaster.

MCC serves as a channel for interchange between churches and community groups where we work around the world and the North American churches who send us, so that all may grow and be transformed.

MCC strives for peace, justice and dignity of all people by sharing our experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ.

MCC in 1995

by Deborah Fast

This "year in review" issue of *a Common Place* looks back on MCC's work throughout the world in 1995. Nine hundred and twenty-seven workers in 57 countries including Canada and the United States served people in need on behalf of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches and other compassionate people.

North American programs worked to promote racial reconciliation, and to discern how best to structure the organization to carry out our vision of service. And MCC as a whole worked more deliberately to "widen the bands of friendship"—to connect people in North America and others around the world.

Three major areas of MCC involvement in 1995 were Laos, Zambia and the former Yugoslavia. Much of this work focused on the devastating aftermath of war—clearing unexploded bombs in Laos and helping waves of refugees in the former Yugoslavia. In Zambia MCC joined the churches in their efforts to distribute relief food to their neighbors in areas suffering prolonged drought.

SELFHELP Crafts of the World addressed the world's growing unemployment crisis, continuing a tradition begun in 1946 of providing jobs for Third World craftspeople.

For statistical information and analysis of MCC personnel worldwide and of MCC's donations and spending, see pages 12 through 15. ■

On the cover: Jeff Johnson learns about service with SALSA—San Antonio (Texas) Learning through Service and Action, jointly sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions and San Antonio Mennonite Church. MCC Summer Service worker Sonia Perez assisted Jeff's church group and others in short-term urban service programs in summer, 1995. MCC photo by Emily Will.

a Common Place invites readers to meet the people MCC workers have come to know, and to search for the strength and hope we share as children of God. *a Common Place* promises readers an honest look at life on the edge of survival, trustworthy information about the events of our world and practical ways of working together to make a difference.
a Common Place is published by the Mennonite Central Committee, a relief, service and community development agency that strives for peace, justice and the dignity of all people by sharing its experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ. Our point of view is shaped by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ faith tradition and some 900 workers serving in 50 countries in food production, health, education, job creation, refugee assistance and conciliation. MCC is sponsored by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.

Connections form a truly global church

by John A. Lapp
MCC Executive Director

This 75th anniversary year was an occasion to discern what gives Mennonite Central Committee its distinctive flavor. It is difficult to reduce the essence of MCC to one short phrase. To be sure, the phrase "In the name of Christ" captures MCC's religious character and compassionate purpose. Our intent is to hear the voice of God and to make God's love visible.

But other relief and development agencies are also driven by the Jesus model of being "moved with compassion." What makes MCC distinctive in this age of organizations—200 relief and development agencies in Canada and the United States alone—is that MCC was not formed by a single visionary or a special interest group but by a group of churches sharing a common purpose.

When early MCC leaders Arthur Slagel, Vesta Zook and Orie O. Miller left for Russia in 1920, they wanted to "represent in all work and labors the interest and principles of our church." Today, Allen and Fannie King in Hutchinson, Kan., end each of their letters to Pam and Ron Ferguson, MCC workers in Uganda, with these words: "Thank you for being there in Africa representing us."

MCC is not an autonomous, self-directed institution. MCC represents the enthusiasm, vision, energy and commitments of "our people"—people who contribute through congregational offerings, raise funds with relief sales and thrift shops, give food, clothing, school and health kits, volunteer for service and pray for this work. They do this with a sense of ownership for "our work" through "our agency." The strength of MCC is its constituency.

With strong constituent support in 1995, MCC was able to continue its worldwide response to meet human need. This included training Laotians to deal with unexploded ordnance. We were also able to ship 29 metric tons (MT) of food for refugees and displaced people to former Yugoslavia and 56 MT to Russia. We assisted local churches in agricultural development, education and health. And people were trained for conflict mediation on all continents save Australia.

Involvement in this ministry has had a wonderful by-product. As workers immerse themselves in communities throughout North America and across the world, they and their hosts have become friends. They have helped workers to define program and have sent messages back to constituent churches. Now we represent two constituencies; those who receive have also become "our people." It goes without saying that the concerns of North American constituents do not always mesh with the realities of this other constituency.

One theme of this anniversary year has been to move more deliberately to connect these two constituencies. People on location and those who formed and support MCC are eager to get acquainted. They want to widen the bands of friendship, to experience the joy of intercultural conversation. MCC welcomes these initiatives. We believe these connections will help both constituencies develop fuller understandings of the world and to encourage a sense of community on a larger scale. Above all, such connectedness will form the sinews of a truly global church, a peoplehood that reaches beyond the provincial, national, ethnic and denominational boundaries that often inhibit God's grace from liberating us in all its fullness. ■

MCC is like an artists' cooperative

"At times I think the MCC Board is like a board of directors for an artists' cooperative. In this case our MCC workers are the artists. MCC workers are creative people, often working at the edges of human experience. Their assignments become a kind of art, worked out in the lives of those they serve. Board policy is not always easy for an artist to follow or appreciate. At times this creates problems. But our MCC work is so beautiful that you look beyond the problems. This tension between creativity and policy is fascinating and stimulating—that's what makes it worthwhile to come to board meetings.

We have tremendous confidence in our people working on the edges. This is the side of MCC that inspires us. I was once on a board of a local arts council. In the end I lost interest because the individual artists couldn't separate their personal interest from those of the group. In MCC, artists work for the interests of others, rather than for themselves."

Paul Quiring
MCC Board member

MCC Summer Service worker Sarah Abbott explores a park ecosystem with Latoya Thomas. Sarah worked with a day camp sponsored by Arbor Place, a Christian community center in Lancaster, Pa. MCC photo by Mark Beach.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Clear sight for reconciling people

by Lynette Meck
MCC U.S.
Executive Director

"The good gift is a clear sight grace-wrapped."
Anonymous

In 1995 Mennonite Central Committee U.S. staff and board members began unwrapping a gift—a focus we call "Broadening the Vision."

Firmly rooted in the MCC U.S. mission to meet human need and "nurture the gospel vision of a reconciled people in a reconciled world," this focus addresses hatred and discord between people of different races and ethnicities in North America. While MCC promotes peace and reconciliation in international contexts, MCC U.S. must promote racial reconciliation within North America.

During the year, God's grace and some "clear sight" moved among us in many ways:

1. The Summer Service program grew to 75 participants. Since 1982 this program has provided opportunities for Native Americans, Hispanics, Asian/Pacific Islanders and African Americans to serve in their communities.

2. Doubling in size, the Service Internship program continued to provide one- and two-year service opportunities for persons from Native American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and African American communities. Each participant has a mentor who assists in spiritual and leadership development. Eight participated in 1995, and we plan to increase to 12 in 1996.

3. All staff assessed how our assumptions about personnel administration and behavior might exclude people of other cultures.

4. Staff helped to plan, implement and evaluate the "Restoring Our Sight" conference in Chicago. Conference participants, of diverse races and nationalities, worked to understand and overcome racism.

5. MCC U.S. signed on to "The Damascus Road," a training process to lay the foundation for the long-term work of overcoming racism in Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions. Five staff members will receive the training in 1996.

6. We produced *Free Indeed,* a video and study guide about racism and white privilege in North America.

7. Community Ministries staff began to develop a new service unit model. Set in an urban center with Mennonite congregations of diverse ethnic backgrounds, the model will include service workers from that community and from the more traditional MCC constituency to create a multi-ethnic endeavor.

8. A task force has started to discuss the future location of MCC U.S. offices. Our work in the United States could be strengthened by working from an urban center, in closer proximity to people living in poverty.

The challenge for MCC U.S. in 1995, as it looked for ways to "broaden its vision," was to find more ways for its traditional and its diverse constituency to work together at meeting human need "In the name of Christ." A multicultural constituency must identify and overcome racial prejudices and stereotypes in order to serve together in practical and purposeful ways. Working together to overcome these barriers we will model the "gospel vision of a reconciled people in a reconciled world" and discover "clear sight, grace-wrapped." ■

Mennonite
Central
Committee
Canada

A new formula for cooperation

by Marvin Frey
MCC Canada
Executive Director

Fred Grinder, a gardener in Dog Creek, B.C., uses composting and irrigation techniques to grow "super veggies." MCC volunteers gardened with Fred, demonstrating root cellars and enjoying his friendship. MCC photo courtesy Menno Wiebe.

In this year of MCC's anniversary celebration, we remember with gratitude the faithfulness of the many supporters who in the past 75 years have given so freely of their time, talents and resources to enable us to serve on their behalf.

MCC in Canada is a family of six organizations in eight offices from the Maritimes to the West Coast. MCC volunteers in Canada serve from Rigolet to Port Hardy, from Little Buffalo to Montreal, in development and education projects, in cities and villages, "In the name of Christ."

The past year illustrates some of the continuing uncertainties of the Canadian scene. Increasingly, in politics and in the church, we see central structures weaken and regional distinctives grow. The differences between Francophone and Anglophone cultures in Canada has often been a source of creativity and strength; the October 30 referendum on Quebec sovereignty, which failed to pass by the narrowest of margins, reminds us that this tension is, for many Quebecois, in need of further resolution.

Longstanding tensions between Native and other Canadians have also resurfaced, particularly in confrontations this summer at Dog Creek, B.C., and Ipperwash, Ont. MCC national and provincial staff relate to members of these communities and have stood with them. MCC personnel have also represented the Mennonite constituency at a Sacred Assembly called by Member of Parliament Elijah Harper. This meeting, held in early December 1995, brought together 3,000 people of faith to identify some of the spiritual dynamics within questions of ethnic identity, power and land. The assembly has provided a hopeful beginning to further steps along the road to reconciliation.

Within the MCC world, 1995 has also been a time of beginnings, with management staff transitions in both MCC Canada and the provincial MCCs. Perhaps most significantly, the six MCCs in Canada have agreed to a new formula for cooperation, which will mean MCC Canada will downsize as of September 1997. This decision marks the beginning of a new phase for the MCCs in Canada, and like all changes it will entail some difficulties as we develop new and less centralized ways to work together.

The change, however, is based on an essential continuity of vision: to offer ourselves "In the name of Christ" to our brothers and sisters, abroad and in our own countries, who are most in need. ■

a Common Place is published as an insert in March and September, and as a second class publication in January, May, July and November by Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Editor-in-chief is Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker. Editor is Deborah Fast. Designer is Michael Eby-Good. Art Director is Judith Rempel Smucker. Subscription available at no cost upon request.
©1996 by Mennonite Central Committee. All rights reserved.

former Yugoslavia

Working with courageous Christians

by Mark Jantzen
MCC worker in Belgrade

Gerhard and Frieda Isaak pack material resources in Winnipeg, Man., for shipment overseas. MCC photo by Bruce Hildebrand.

In 1995 MCC sent to former Yugoslavia:

blankets	2,471
towels	1,031
clothing	10,160 kg/22,353 lbs
layettes	3,657
soap	16,740 kg/36,830 lbs
school kits	16,303
canned meat	19,988 kg/43,974 lbs
food parcels	2,239
refugee kits	882

(including towels, soap and other hygiene items)

It is ironic and sad that in the 50th anniversary year of the end of World War II, MCC is again assisting war victims in Europe. Major movements of people occurred this year in the former Yugoslavia, with about half a million new refugees since May 1995. MCC has responded primarily by assisting local Christian organizations to alleviate their people's suffering.

Duhovna Stvarnost (Croatian for Spiritual Reality), a Baptist publishing house, is MCC's primary partner for relief to Muslim and Croat parts of Bosnia. MCC's ties with this organization go back over 20 years. Duhovna Stvarnost found itself turning into a relief agency out of necessity. Ivan Vacek is their director for Bosnia.

MCC's distribution of school supplies in Bosnia started two years ago when one of Ivan's trucks had a flat tire in front of Avda Hasanspanich's house in Olovo, 30 kilometers/18 miles from Sarajevo. Avda helped fix the tire and then told Ivan he was an elementary school principal. He was working to open schools, in garages and basements, after normal schools had been closed for two years due to the war. School buildings were destroyed, he lacked textbooks and paper, but he was determined. Avda asked Ivan for notebooks for his pupils. Ivan passed the request on to MCC, which in turn asked North American churches for help. The response was overwhelming, with 16,303 school kits sent so far.

German Mennonites are another important partner for MCC in Bosnia. The German Mennonite Peace Committee coordinates international and local volunteers in three Bosnian towns. German Mennonite relief agencies keep a truck on the road all the time bringing supplies to Bosnia and on occasion to Belgrade, Serbia.

In Belgrade, MCC works with Bread of Life, a relief organization founded by the First Baptist and Pentecostal congregations in response to refugees who started arriving there four years ago. Starting from scratch, in a formerly Communist country where social work by churches was

This baptism service, including refugees, takes place at the Pentecostal Temple of the Holy Trinity, a sponsoring church of Bread of Life (see article). MCC photo by Howard Zehr.

forbidden, Bread of Life now provides food packages to some 3,000 refugee families or about 12,000 people each month. An important part of every package is MCC canned beef.

Meat plays an important role in the Yugoslav culture. Several national dishes require ground beef, but meat is unaffordable for most refugees. MCC canned beef helps families reclaim some sense of normalcy. Thousands of refugees have heard the story of the MCC canner and appreciate the love that goes into this project, and the high quality of product.

Our partners in the former Yugoslavia also distribute material aid from MCC. They want people to see a Christianity of love in action instead of a Christianity at war. This builds bridges to the Muslim community that has suffered tremendously at the hands of Christians.

In addition to relief, MCC helps our partners with the longer-term goal of reconciliation and lasting peace. Whatever the politicians signed at Dayton, Ohio, a lot of work is required to overcome the pain and anguish of this war. An MCC worker serves with the Christian Information Service (CIS) in Zagreb, Croatia. CIS is deliberately shifting its focus from being a press agency and relief coordinator to peace and reconciliation work. A weekly Peace Circle brings religious leaders from many traditions together to think and pray about ways to increase peace and reconciliation. MCC also helped with a recent seminar on conflict resolution for Bread of Life workers.

The needs in the former Yugoslavia will continue for years. It will be a long time before refugees can return home, and for many it will be impossible. Forgiveness and reconciliation will take even longer. Yet out of the pain and destruction of the war, God is raising up local people and organizations to address these challenges. MCC is fortunate to be invited to walk with these courageous Christians as they work to build lasting peace in the region. ■

Cleaning up "leftovers of war"

Lao

by Ann Martin
MCC East Asia Secretary

"They shall live in safety and no one shall make them afraid" (Ezekiel 34:28).

A Lao woman rises at dawn to scour the forest for wood to kindle a fire before her family awakes. This simple, everyday act could prove life threatening. Bombs dropped more than 20 years ago when the U.S. war in Vietnam spilled over into Laos continue to pose danger.

But in Xieng Khouang Province, northern Laos, people feel a little safer due to Mennonite Central Committee's bomb cleanup efforts. "Now when we go into the forest to look for bamboo shoots, collect firewood or catch birds to eat, and we find a bomb, we mark it and tell the village leader. He notifies the demolition team," says Kham Me. In 1995 an MCC-supported unexploded ordnance (UXO) demolition team safely destroyed 272 cluster bomblets, 127 artillery shells and dozens of other types of ordnance in Nanou village where Kham Me lives.

Thousands of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ people in North America made MCC's work in Laos possible.

- For two years Clarence Overholt, 80, went "wherever the door was open," mostly to church groups in Ohio, to tell of Laos' tragedy, raising some $30,000 U.S.
- Youth in British Columbia amassed more than $60,000 Cdn., forcing the three men who had challenged them to raise funds to shave their heads.
- Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church pledged to sponsor several days of clearing in Pakhom Village, Laos. Their goal was to raise $1,000 U.S.; they ended up with more than triple that amount.

The Laos UXO project also "prompted young people to talk about the problems of militarism," observes one MCC staff person. "In Laos people are suffering because of something we did, so we should help them," says Beth Peachey, 13. Rachel, her 8-year-old sister, explains, "It's like if we are playing and make a mess, then we have to clean it up."

Mennonites' advocacy on behalf of people in Laos has prompted other agencies and governments to join the cleanup effort. The Canadian International Development Agency contributed $200,000 Cdn. The U.S. government is giving $750,000 U.S. per year to prosthetics and trauma care in Xieng Khouang Province, and has announced plans to set up several schools in Laos to train local people in ordnance clearing and community awareness.

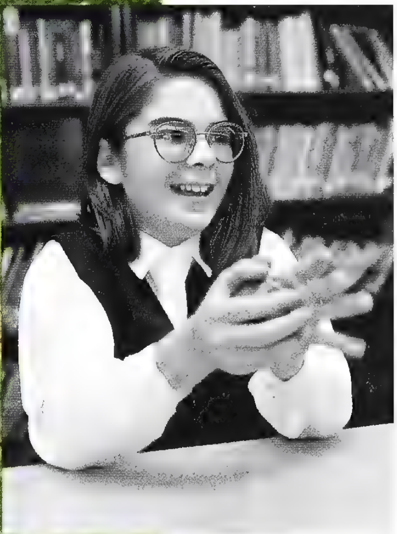
MCC's involvement in clearing unexploded bombs either makes perfect sense or no sense at all. Someone recently commented: "Few projects are better suited to Anabaptists than cleaning up the leftovers from war."

However, in myriad ways this type of project is a poor fit for MCC.

- The work is enormously expensive. First year—June 1994 to May 1995—expenses totalled $1,041,000 Cdn./$760,000 U.S. and second year costs are estimated to top $1.4 million Cdn./$1 million U.S.
- The work depends on highly-paid outside experts, in this case ex-military explosives specialists hired by Mines Advisory Group, MCC's partner in bomb clearing. Huge salary differences exist between experts and Lao persons who actually perform the clearing work.
- For safety reasons expatriate trainers insist on their clearing method, although local people have of necessity been handling ordnance for 20 years. For the moment at least, indigenous clearing strategies are actively discouraged, a policy that contrasts sharply with MCC's model of reliance on indigenous knowledge.

S

Even an everyday activity like gathering firewood can be life threatening in Laos. Bombs dropped here during the U.S. war with Vietnam continue to pose danger. But MCC's bomb cleanup efforts make life a little safer. MCC photo by Jim Kurtz.



"I felt I had to do something. I thought about how I would feel if my mother were killed by a bomb in her flower garden or if my little brother picked up a bomb and it exploded," said Pennsylvania sixth grader Martha Good in late 1994. After hearing about the Laos bomb clearing project in Bible school, Martha wrote to U.S. President Clinton. "Maybe if everyone sends him a letter, then he'll do something," she said.

The letter Martha received from President Clinton did not talk about clearing bombs in Laos. "Maybe I'll write to Hillary Clinton," she says now. "I'll give her a chance; she might take this issue more seriously."

Why did MCC launch the UXO project? Because clearing bombs from Laos' soil needed to be done, and nobody else appeared ready or willing. MCC's decision to undertake this project was guided more by faith than by a cold, hard assessment of opportunities and risks. The unique alchemy of MCC's 20-year history in Laos, strong constituency support and Mennonite convictions about peace and justice produced a response which seems, in retrospect, somehow inevitable.

Mines Advisory Group now leads this project. But MCC remains deeply concerned about the UXO problem in Laos, and in some 60 other countries. MCC must now decide whether to build on our credibility gained through this experience with further advocacy, education or even direct involvement in other clearing projects.

Ezekiel's prophecy of security, peace and deliverance for Israel attests to God's will that all people, everywhere, be free from fear and able to live in peace. ■

"When a neighbor asks for food, we as Tongas do not say no. The most difficult question is, when do you stop giving? How little should you have, to stop giving it to others? It has been a great challenge to me when stocks have become so low and people are coming to request food. How little should I keep for my family?"

Bishop Shamapani

Zambian churches share food and hope in Christ

Zamb

ia

by Lois and
Robert Neufeld
MCC Zambia
country
representatives

Maize bins are empty and many families are eating only one daily meal in southern Zambia and in parts of Zimbabwe as 1995 draws to a close. Following severe drought in the 1994-95 growing season, local Brethren in Christ churches, with MCC-donated food and seeds valued at $1 million Cdn./$750,000 U.S., have organized relief programs to feed their hungry members and neighbors.

Canadian farmers provided a portion of the food through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Over the past 10 years southern Africa has had only two years with adequate rain to produce a good maize crop. Hopes rose in 1994 and then were dashed by patchy showers that stopped before seedlings were adequately nourished, destroying some 50 percent of crops.

Amidst the hardships churches are witnessing to God's love and concern for all people. In Zimbabwe Brethren in Christ leaders, along with local government officers, are distributing food to large families with no wage earners and to widows and orphans. Zimbabwe media lauded this effort that fed some 100,000 people over a six-month period, calling it the country's best model for reaching those who need help.

In Zambia churches have organized "food-for-work" programs where people receive food in exchange for labor on community projects such as roads and school buildings. This program will feed some 6,000 people over a year.

"It is really hard to penetrate through to people with the gospel if they are suffering. If they have not had meals for several days, and you preach to them, it is as though you are joking because their immediate need is not met," explained Rev. Hamakungandu. "At the same time we do not want to have 'food Christians' or 'relief Christians.'"

"But the question still remains the same as the one Jesus asked Philip when he saw the crowds: 'Where can we find food to feed these people?' We cannot ignore physical needs but we also need to give them hope that is only found in Christ Jesus," added Rev. Hamakungandu, a teacher at the Sikalongo Bible Institute.

MCC's food aid has been a significant symbol that North Americans have not forgotten the people of Zambia.

"It is difficult when you try to think how and where you are going to get food," commented Pastor Hamasera of Macha Brethren in Christ Church. "But I can see that MCC supporters are giving from the bottom of their hearts to help Christians across the sea."

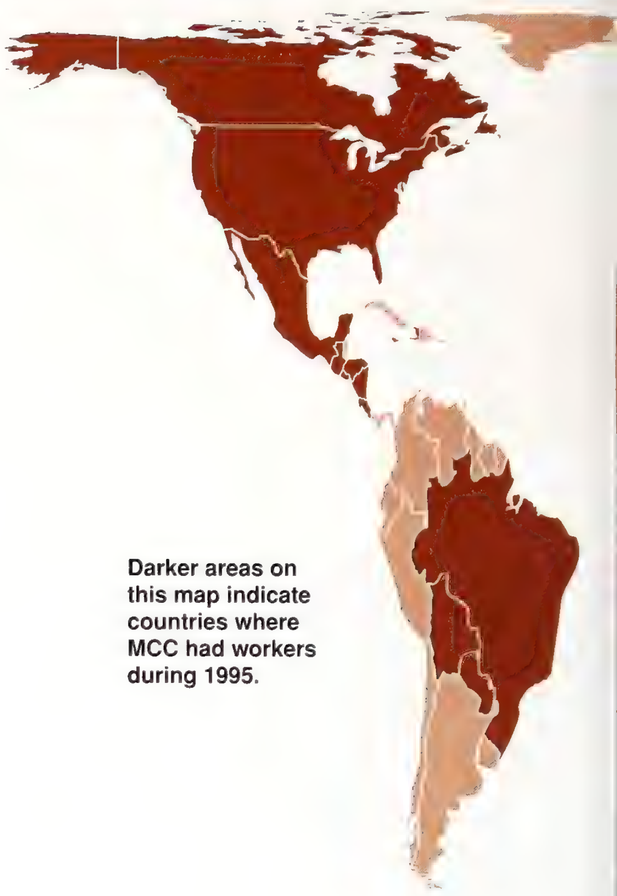
In southern Africa and elsewhere MCC aims to work with churches, helping them with their mission and work rather than planning MCC projects and bypassing the wisdom of local Christians.

Before the October 1995 planting season, churches distributed 50 metric tons of MCC-supplied maize and groundnut seeds. Christians in southern Africa appeal to Christians everywhere to join them in praying for a bountiful harvest in 1996. ■

Albert Munachonga, a teacher in Sikalongo, Zambia, checks his field, made dusty by the drought. Without maize, says Mr. Munachonga, people make do with eating paste made from the seeds of wild mbura fruit. MCC photo by Robert Neufeld.

The people we need

by Dwight J. McFadden, Jr.
Personnel Services Director



Darker areas on this map indicate countries where MCC had workers during 1995.

Many of us remember how we were called to serve with MCC or another church agency. We often connect the memory to a specific person who telephoned, wrote a letter, invited us to a meal, shared information or just tapped us on the shoulder.

One MCC worker told me he was considering seminary when he got a call from an MCC representative who challenged him to consider service with MCC. The MCC worker states, "In that phone call he gave me a choice of three locations, made a suggestion of one, I said 'OK' and I was on my way overseas. This MCC opportunity to serve transformed my life," he now says.

Not every MCC experience or call is this dramatic and speedy. Yet each is significant.

Bev and Rick Binder served in Egypt with MCC and then resettled in Abbotsford, B.C. They both entered teaching positions, while sharing the job of raising their children. At about this time we were looking for representatives for northern Sudan. We needed strong, relational people, one of whom could take a teaching assignment. We contacted Bev and Rick and, after prayer and processing with family, their small group and friends, they decided they were the people we needed and that God was calling them to a country torn by war.

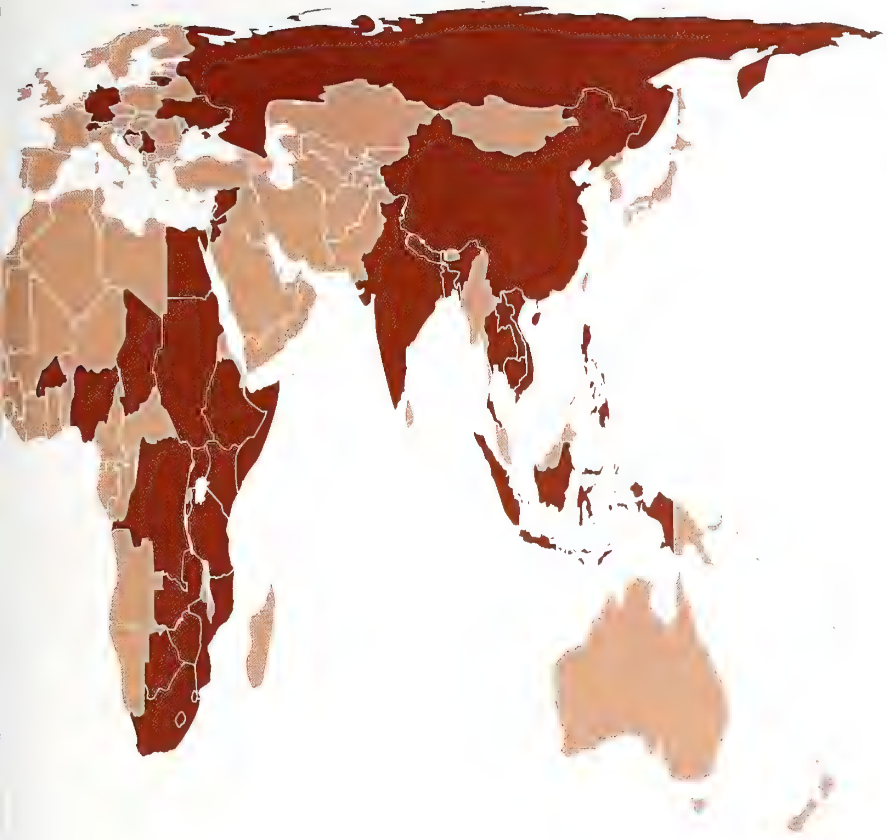
Cindy Wiebe, a registered nurse from Winnipeg, Man., serves at the St. Thomas Health Clinic in New Orleans, La. Cindy accepted this assignment knowing she would be the only volunteer in the MCC unit until new volunteers were found. She faced the challenges of adjusting to life in New Orleans without the support and camaraderie of fellow volunteers. Fifteen months later three new volunteers arrived.

Cindy's commitment to service, in a less than ideal situation, enabled her to contribute positively to the clinic. Reflecting on her experience in New Orleans, Cindy says she loves the work and the vibrant community in which her work is rooted. The city's energy and the spirit of the St. Thomas community gave Cindy a unique opportunity to increase her understanding of racism and other social issues common to the United States and Canada.

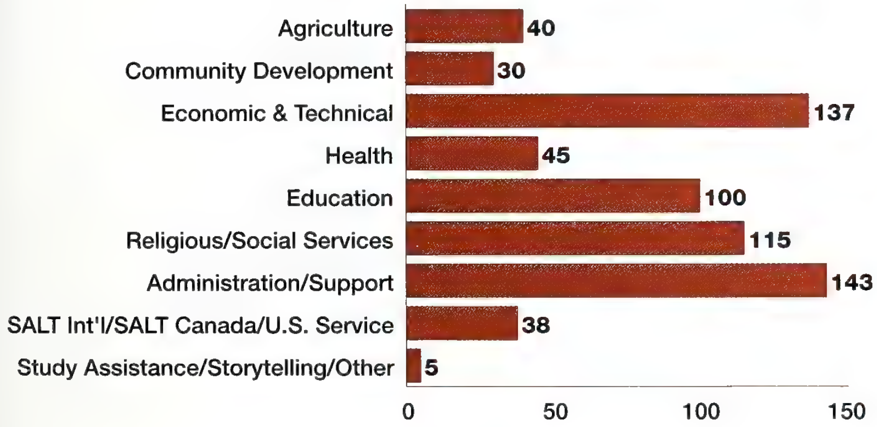
We need folks like these and many more.

The 927 workers who served with MCC in 1995 in 57 countries, including Canada and the United States, enabled your ministry to be high-touch in an increasingly high-tech age.

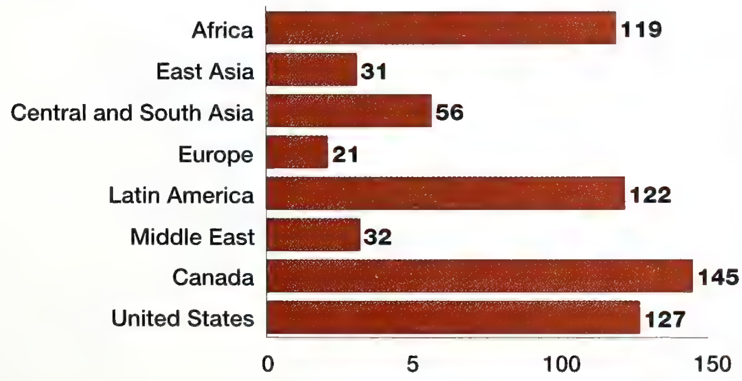
In 1996 we will be recruiting for 165 new workers—57 economic and technical workers, 12 agriculturists, 11 community development workers, 38 teachers, 13 health workers, 34 social service workers—willing to be part of the lifeline connecting us with others in need. The list of assignments will continue to grow, likely to some 260. We also welcome discussion with you about assignment possibilities outside of the above categories. Is God calling you to serve with MCC? ■



MCC Service Workers
by vocation



MCC Service Workers
by region



Personnel
In service on November 30, 1995
by country and continent

Africa	**119**
Botswana	8
Burkina Faso	12
Burundi	6
Chad	8
Ethiopia	2
Kenya	10
Lesotho	6
Mozambique	10
Nigeria	8
Somalia	1
South Africa	6
Sudan	8
Swaziland	6
Tanzania	3
Uganda	8
Zaire	7
Zambia	9
Zimbabwe	1
East Asia	**31**
China	8
Kingdom of Cambodia	12
Laos	2
Thailand	1
Vietnam	8
Central and South Asia	**56**
Bangladesh	18
India	4
Indonesia	19
Nepal	8
Philippines	7
Europe	**21**
Croatia	1
Germany	2
Lithuania	1
Northern Ireland	2
Russia	5
Serbia	2
Switzerland	7
Ukraine	1
Latin America	**122**
Bolivia	26
Brazil	14
Costa Rica	2
El Salvador	11
Guatemala	6
Haiti	16
Honduras	6
Jamaica	14
Mexico	12
Nicaragua	10
Paraguay	5
Middle East	**32**
Egypt	18
Jordan	2
Lebanon	2
Syria	2
West Bank	8
North America	**546**
Tòtal U.S. Service Workers	127
Total U.S. Salaried Staff	159
Total Cdn. Service Workers	145
Total Cdn. Salaried Staff	115
Grand Total	**927**

Your Dollars at Work

by Berry Friesen

Administration and Resources Director

Consolidated income

Mennonite Central Committee, from supporters in three continents, received $62.1 million Cdn./$45.3 million U.S. in the last fiscal year. This was down 4 percent from the record level of contributions in 1994 but met budgeted expectations for 1995.

SELFHELP Crafts of the World sales and income from thrift shop, relief sale and housebuilding increased by 8 and 4 percent respectively. Gifts-in-kind and cash gifts decreased by 3 and 4 percent respectively, in part because in 1995 no single event generated contributions like the Rwanda crisis of 1994.

The largest decrease from 1994 was in governmental grants, which declined by 1.6 million Cdn./$1.2 million U.S. A reduction in Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) grants and fewer CIDA-funded food shipments accounted for this decline.

Income largely from MCC's church constituency—cash gifts, gifts-in-kind, revenue from shops, sales and houses—accounted for just over one-half of total support. Cash and material contributions were only part of the picture. Untold hours of volunteer time were equally vital and enabled MCC to channel 88.6 percent of income to program.

Consolidated expenses

Consolidated expenses for all MCC offices totaled $64.7 million Cdn./$47.2 million U.S. This is $2.6 million Cdn./$1.9 million U.S. more than income and up three percent from 1994. Both increases were largely due to 1995 expenditure of designated funds received in 1994 when income exceeded expenses by nearly $1.3 million Cdn/$1 million U.S.

Our Asia and SELFHELP Crafts programs were the two largest sectors of activity in 1995; each accounted for about 19 percent of total expenses. The largest shift occurred in the African program where expenses declined by $5.5 million Cdn./$4 million U.S. due to reduced food shipments.

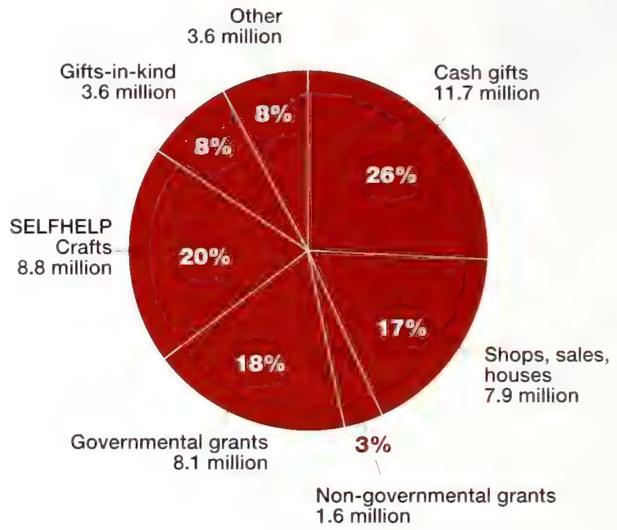
Our program in Europe and the former Soviet Union program grew significantly, by $1 million Cdn./$0.75 million U.S.

Administrative overhead costs were 11.4 percent of the total.

These consolidated data summarize the activity of 12 MCC entities as reported in seven different financial statements in Canada and the United States. Copies of audited financial statements may be obtained from local MCC offices. ■

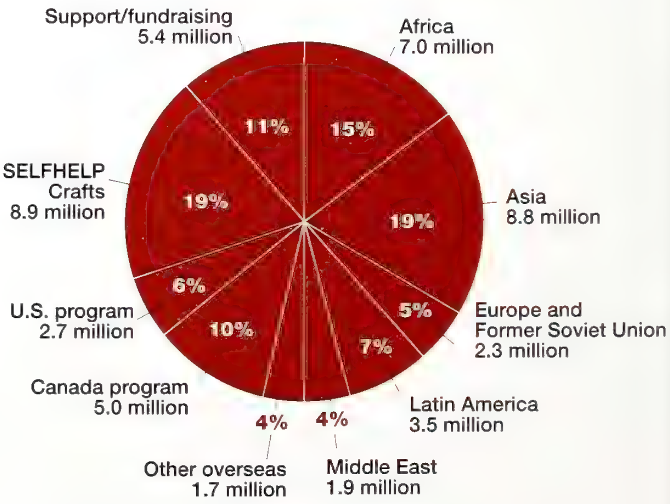
MCC Consolidated Income

$45,267,000 U.S.



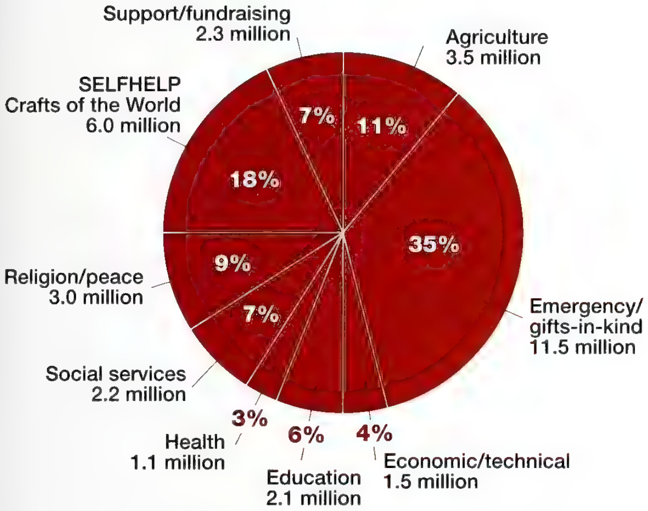
MCC Consolidated Expenses

$47,179,000 U.S.



MCC International Expenses

$33,244,000 U.S.



MCC U.S.

In U.S. dollars.
For 12 months ended November 30, 1995.

We received $4,205,000 from:	
contributions	$3,489,000
grants	13,000
programs that earn revenue	576,000
gifts in kind such as food, clothing, bedding	117,000
other income	10,000
TOTAL income received was	**$4,205,000**
We used $4,225,000 for:	
Community Service work	$773,000
Leadership development for youth of color	271,000
Short-term youth programs	195,000
Peace and Justice work	765,000
Regional offices	576,000
Developmental disabilities/mental health work	141,000
Fundraising	510,000
Collecting material resources	405,000
Distributing gifts in kind	117,000
Executive office and support	472,000
TOTAL spending was	**$4,225,000**
Fund balances were reduced by	**$20,000**

MCC International

In U.S. dollars.
For 12 months ended November 30, 1995.

We received $31,943,000 from	
Canadian donors	$3,772,000
U.S. donors	8,221,000
other donors	264,000
grants from non-governmental agencies	1,080,000
grants from government agencies	2,188,000
sales of SELFHELP Crafts items	6,089,000
earnings from investments	543,000
programs that earn revenue	348,000
other sources	147,000
gifts in kind from Canadian donors	6,759,000
gifts in kind from U.S. donors	2,532,000
TOTAL income was	**$31,943,000**
We used $33,244,000 for	
agricultural work	$ 3,496,000
emergency assistance	2,222,000
economic and technical assistance	1,450,000
educational work	2,155,000
health work	1,093,000
social services	2,240,000
religious and peace work	2,944,000
SELFHELP Crafts activities	6,011,000
support and fund raising activities	2,343,000
gifts in kind distributed	9,290,000
TOTAL spending was	**$33,244,000**
Fund balances were reduced by	**$1,301,000**

MCC Canada

In Canadian dollars.
For 12 months ended August 31, 1995.

We received $22,180,000 from:	
donations, relief sales, thrift shops	$7,050,000
the Canadian International Development Agency	3,460,000
projects that earn revenue [1]	510,000
sales of SELFHELP Crafts items	2,830,000
donations and grants for food distribution (Canadian Foodgrains Bank)	8,330,000
TOTAL income was	**$ 22,180,000**
We used $2,710,000 in Canada for:	
programs in Canada	$ 1,480,000
assistance to Kanadier Mennonites [2]	430,000
general administration	800,000
We used $20,330,000 overseas:	
to ship food overseas (Canadian Foodgrains Bank)	$9,050,000
to pay SELHELP artisans and get their crafts to stores	2,780,000
to support the relief and development work of Mennonite Central Committee	8,500,000
TOTAL spending was	**$23,040,000**
Fund balances were reduced by[3]	**$860,000**

[1] includes sale of low German books, papers and reimbursements from programs in Atlantic Canada

[2] conservative colony Mennonites in Canada and Mexico

[3] we shipped food this year that we received the end of last year

Challenged by unemployment crisis

SELF HELP

crafts of the world

by Paul Myers
SELFHELP Crafts
Director

Making brightly clothed dolls gives an income and a chance for training to this member of the Howrah Women Association in Calcutta, India. SELFHELP Crafts supports the group by buying and marketing the dolls. MCC photo by Howard Zehr.

In the Fall issue of *Foreign Affairs* we read that the growing global unemployment crisis is greater than at any time since the depression of the 1930s. One person of every three in the world's eligible labor force is under- or unemployed. Many people in many countries, including our own, do not have even the prospect of a job. Every day in 1995 at SELFHELP Crafts we received a request from a new group asking us for work.

In 1946 Edna Ruth Byler, Mary Lauver and others responded to a plea from Puerto Rican women for help to feed their families. They began to sell handicrafts at women's meetings and out of Edna Ruth's car trunk—the beginning of SELFHELP Crafts. Today some 200 shops across North America sell handicrafts from many more countries. Retail sales exceeded $8,790,000 Cdn./$12 million U.S. this year, providing more than 11,500 full-time jobs in 35 countries. Staff and thousands of volunteers and shoppers together made this happen.

The work is worthwhile. Wantana Thianhorm of Lao Song Handicrafts in Thailand writes: "I very much appreciate your help. I love the MCC. These people are good not just for me, but for all people they meet. Thanks again for your prayers. I know God has to be with us and help our problems whenever we trust and believe him."

We must do more. We are challenged to provide consistent, steady work for producers, recognizing that millions more are vulnerable and desperately need work. We are challenged to tell their stories more effectively to communicate with the customer on Main Street.

Come and join us: buy a fairly traded gift, volunteer, host a one-day sale, learn about and pray for the work of SELFHELP Crafts. Justice and peace in our world, communities and families cannot be achieved when people are hungry and cannot buy food. As Jesus reminded us in feeding the 5,000, it is difficult for hungry people to hear God's voice. ■

Distribution of U.S. and Canadian retail sales dollars

in U.S. dollars

We received in retail sales	**$12,261,000**
We used $12,487,000:	
for retailing costs	4,948,000
for purchasing crafts from artisans	3,439,000
for freight/brokerage fees	781,000
for marketing/information	926,000
for warehouse costs	1,239,000
for administration	1,154,000
Our total expenses	**$12,487,000**
Our deficit was	**$226,000**

were not even 10 good people in Sodom. That region, today called the Dead Sea, is still a hostile place for humans.

The Chinese have a proverb: "There are two good men, one is dead and the other is not yet born." We may not all agree on what sin is or on how we should respond to it. But likely we are all able to acknowledge that we missionaries make mistakes, and some of these have moral significance.

A Sunday school teacher told her class the story of Lot's family. After they were warned to flee from the city without looking back, Lot's wife couldn't resist the temptation to take a quick look at the awful destruction going on behind her. When Lot's wife looked back, she turned into a pillar of salt, the teacher concluded dramatically.

One little girl was quick to make a modern application. "When my mother looked back," she declared, "she turned into a telephone pole."

Sin can still destroy individuals and cities, even cultures or countries. When we ignore sin or tolerate it, we, like Lot, can get into trouble. Sin is as deceptive as it has ever been. With the cultural mixing that goes on in the modern global village, maintaining moral values may be more difficult than it has ever been.

Moral complexity: Where do you find yourself? Are you in Abraham's shoes, watching a close friend or church member headed for big trouble in the moral complexity of the modern world? Or maybe you are like Lot's wife. You usually run away from sin, but you can't resist looking back wistfully to see what you're leaving behind. Or maybe you identify with Lot. You've tried to make good decisions for yourself and your family. But little by little you've been drawn into situations of compromise. Now you're no longer sure what's right and what's wrong.

You need a few close, accountable relationships with Christian men or women to help you maintain a clear moral perspective. You cannot adjust your moral compass without some external reference points. The spiritual disciplines of prayer, worship, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians provide us with a constant source of challenge and correction in a world where right and wrong are frequently confused.

We may not always agree among fellow Christians as to what's right and what's wrong. But we do agree that it's terribly important to make correct moral choices. And we are committed to help each other make those wise choices every day, at home, in our work, in the church.

We are a community committed to supporting the brother or sister who fails, who makes wrong choices. We are committed to love, acceptance and forgiveness, three important values that all of us keep learning from Jesus.

Close, accountable relationships? Do you have them? Without them you may find yourself in a lot of trouble. Getting close to another is a part of getting close to God. And intimacy with God is not possible without accountability to God's family members.

Lot tried it on his own, and he just about lost it. We can learn a lot from Lot.

Nathan Showalter is pastor of Taipei International Church and is a mission associate with the General Conference Mennonite Church's Commission on Overseas Mission. This article is adapted from one written for missionaries and published in Taiwan Mission *(July 1995).*

Are your retirement investments rooted in your values?

Roots are unseen, but they find their expression in the light of day.

Same with living your beliefs, such as investing your hard-earned retirement money according to your values.

That's the reason for MMA Praxis Mutual Funds. With MMA Praxis, you can get an IRA that invests in enterprises that enhance peace, justice, and the quality of human life. An IRA that can really express your values.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

M M A

News

The grand chief of Canada's First Nations, Ovide Mercredi, spoke at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Jan. 9. "Make alliances with our people," he told the students. "First Nations and Mennonites have common values, and these values make us friends." (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Two groups were banned from participating in MissionsFest, one of the largest annual gatherings of Christians in British Columbia, held Jan. 22-26. The United Church of Canada was refused a booth "because it does not teach that the only way to God is coming through Jesus Christ alone." Mennonite pastor Henry Krause of Langley (B.C.) Mennonite Fellowship was refused permission to lead a seminar that would have discussed Jesus' love of the enemy and how war creates refugees. He proposed using the Abbotsford Air Show as a case study. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Arvo Part, world-famous composer from Estonia, spoke to students at Canadian Mennonite Bible College at a student forum Jan. 23. The composer was in Winnipeg as the distinguished international guest artist-in-residence for the city's 1996 du Maurier Ltd. New Music Festival. CMBC and Concord College choirs sang one of Part's compositions in the festival. "The path to God is a straightforward one, and therefore it must be able to be expressed simply," Part said. "I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me." When those gathered sang "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" for Part, he responded, "With what you sing, I think you know everything better than I do."

Childhood deaths bind Winnipeg mother to Laotians

Winnipeg (MCC)—Margaret Fast knows what it is like to lose a child. That's why she can identify so strongly with parents in Laos who have seen children killed and injured by unexploded bombs left over from the Vietnam War.

"I remember what it was like when my son was undergoing treatments," she says of her son, Willie, who died of cancer five years ago at age 14. "I remember how much it hurt to see him hurting. Then I think of parents in Laos—seeing their kids blind or without arms or legs because of bombs.

"I feel for them. When your child hurts, you hurt."

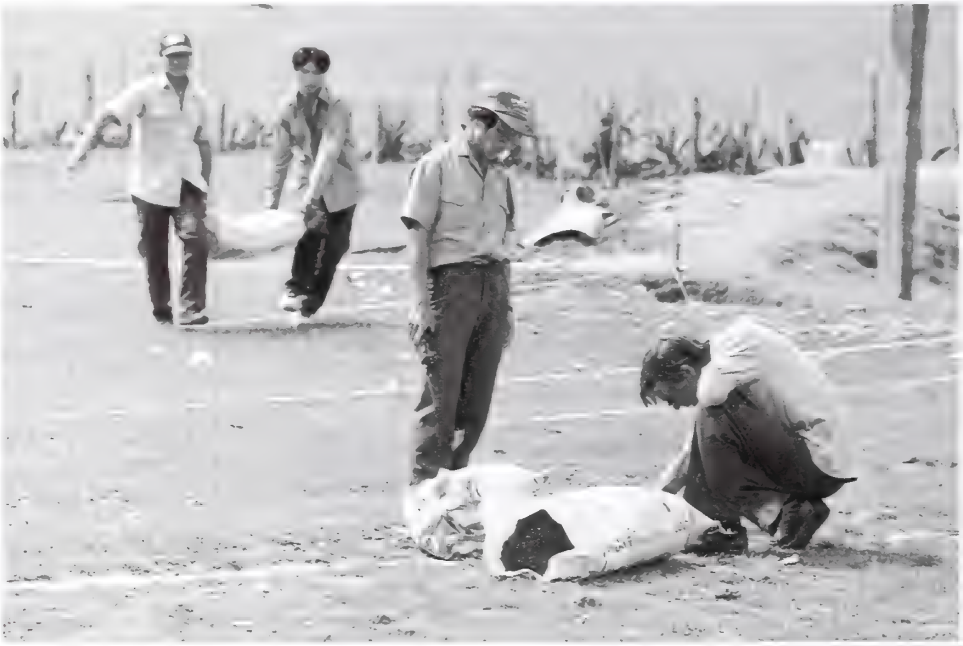
Fast, co-owner of Willmar Windows in Winnipeg, was part of a tour that visited Mennonite Central Committee-supported bomb clearing efforts in Laos last November. Now the McIvor Mennonite Brethren Church member is visiting churches and other groups in Manitoba to tell people about how unexploded bombs dropped on that country during the Vietnam War are still killing and injuring people today.

"I tell people that they just can't imagine what it's like to be a parent in Laos, wondering if your children are going to make it through another day," she says, remembering playgrounds and yards that contain unexploded bombs just below the surface.

Fast

She vividly remembers talking to one man who had painstakingly cleared the bombs from around his house by hand; he threw them into a nearby pond, where children still swim.

She also recalls going to a hospital to visit a young farmer whose hand had been blown off by a bomb. "There was real fear in his eyes," she says. "How would he manage in the future?



Howard Zehr (MCC)

Safeguarding the children: *Laotian technicians lug sandbags to the spot where a bomblet has been located at the Impeng village school. Graham Pritchard (far right), of Mines Advisory Group, will place an explosive device by the bomblet and then detonate the charge. Because the bomblet is so close to the school, sandbags are used to absorb the shrapnel. According to one Laotian technician, when this school was established in 1980, children picked up thousands of bomblets from the grounds and placed them in a bomb crater, with no casualties.*

How would he provide for his family? It's not fair—he didn't do anything to deserve this. He wasn't even born when the war was going on. It hurts to think about it."

But the visit also showed her "the triumph of the human spirit. I've so much admiration for people in Laos. I wish everyone could meet these ordinary people who are dealing with such incredible hardships, yet overcoming the problems."

Fast says she has received many opportunities to speak since returning from Laos. "Everyone should know about the tragedies that are happening in Laos," she says, adding that "it's also heartening to know that something can be done to help." *John Longhurst*

MCC plans to help churches connect overseas

Calgary, Alta. (MCC)—The Mennonite Central Committee board at annual meetings Feb. 16 and 17 approved a recommendation for the next two years to focus on helping connect congregations from around the world directly with one another.

MCC was created in 1920 to accomplish tasks that churches and partners could not do effectively on their own, reported overseas director Ray Brubacher, who brought the recommendation to the board.

"Today many activities can take place directly without institutional programming," Brubacher said. "Churches are calling for more people-to-people relationships. For years Mennonites in Indonesia have been asking for direct links to Mennonite congregations in North America."

So for the next two years, two part-time staff people, a reference committee and regional and provincial staff will focus on connecting congregations, an effort for which MCC has set aside $80,000 U.S. ($110,000 Cdn.) annually.

Connecting congregations is not new to MCC. Increasingly MCC has worked at providing direct contacts between congregations.

In 1995, for example, congregations in Saskatchewan hosted the Servant Singers, a choir of Nigerian women. Shirley Peters, Rabbit Lake, Sask., who hosted two of the eight women in her home last year, told the board, "We will never forget or cease to be thankful for [the experience]. We were inspired by their love of God, enthusiasm, thankfulness, ability to adjust, their love of others."

Other examples include MCC-facilitated connections between a Mennonite church in Nebraska and a seminary in Guatemala, and a Mennonite church in Illinois with a Lesotho Independent church.

Budget: The board also approved a 1996 income budget of $35.3 million U.S. ($48.4 million Cdn.) and program plans that call for more than 900 workers in 57 countries, including Canada and the United States. This income budget is a decrease of 2.3 percent from the $36.1 million U.S. ($49.5 million Cdn.) received in 1995.

MCC's 1996 budget is based on anticipated contributions of $12.4 million U.S. ($17 million Cdn.) from U.S. supporters and $4.3 million Cdn. ($3.1 million U.S.) from Canadian supporters. Foundation and Canadian government funding, Self-Help Crafts of the World sales, as well as donated grain, milk and other gifts-in-kind, make up the remainder of the budgeted income.

Personnel: MCC personnel director Dwight McFadden and Lynette Meck, MCC U.S. executive director, also brought to the board two proposals regarding personnel, setting new performance standards for handling applications received by MCC at its various offices.

These standards are

- Personnel Services in Akron, Pa., and Winnipeg will determine, within 35 calendar days, whether an applicant is qualified to serve with MCC. A specific assignment will not usually be found within this deadline, but applicants will know whether or not they have been approved for service.
- Personnel Services in Akron and Winnipeg will communicate with applicants every other week for the first three months after receiving their applications.

Board members readily accepted these two standards. "For years we have been hearing that the personnel approval process has been taking too long and that people are not hearing from MCC regularly enough after they apply to serve with MCC," said Mary Burkholder, an MCC executive committee member from Kitchener, Ont.

Inside the news

MCC U.S. discusses racism / p. 16

Self-Help gets new board / p. 16

MMA reports record growth / p. 17

MDS uses new communication tools, barely makes budget / p. 17

Conference focuses on adult education / p. 18

Guete resigns from CHM / p. 19

Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg is offering to refund airfare for prospective students from the United States who decide to enroll at the school. "We now have a few U.S. students here, and they really add to the community. I hope this offer motivates other prospective students from the United States to visit us," said registrar John I. Friesen.

• • •

Fort St. John, B.C., was the location of an experiment in justice last fall. On Feb. 8, 1994, Mollie Aspassin died of a gunshot wound at the Doig River Indian Reserve. In the case of "Her Majesty the Queen v. Stoney" the judge, defense and the families of victim and accused all agreed to use "circle sentencing" as part of the process to determine an appropriate sentence. On Aug. 14, 1995, a circle of 46 people including family and friends of the deceased, members of the community, the offender and his family and the court party arrived at a consensus on a sentence for the accused. "The six-hour meeting was full of expressions of long-suppressed emotions of pain and bitterness as well as forgiveness," writes Martin Goerzen, a counselor and organizer of the circle sentencing.

Twenty-five percent of Americans would not give up television permanently for $1 million; 46 percent said they would for that amount, but no less, and 25 percent said they would for only $25,000, reports a *TV Guide* survey. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

* * *

Christian Peacemaker Team members' efforts were disrupted when they tried to sell tomatoes Feb. 9 in a Hebron, West Bank, marketplace. The CPTers posted a sign saying "Oslo II Market," at their tomato stand, protesting the continued closure of the market, which was to be opened for retail use four months earlier, according to the Oslo II peace accords. Israeli soldiers moved the table from the market out into the street, but the CPTers continued until their produce sold out. The team took the action to support the economic revitalization of Hebron. The markets were forcibly closed in 1994.

* * *

Jack Suderman, Mennonite teacher and missionary in Colombia, gave the Winter Lectures at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Suderman had mixed words for the institutional church. "The institutional presence of our church is indeed heartening ... there has been amazing success in our efforts all over the world," he said. But he also said the Mennonite church is an entrenched church, dedicating the majority of its time to insignificant details, having difficulty reaching consensus on issues, suffering from widespread biblical illiteracy, having difficulty passing on "the vision" to youth, accepting tradition as authority and prefering spectatorship to involvement. He called the church to mission. "I believe the church has been commissioned to be a transforming presence. And I believe that the world needs this presence more now, perhaps, than ever before."

MCC U.S. discusses racism in the church

Calgary, Alta. (MCC)—The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. annual meeting here Feb. 15 held an extended discussion of its commitment to address racism.

The discussion centered on "Broadening the Vision," an MCC statement on racism. While some see a new inclusiveness in Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, much work remains to be done. "The talk needs to be internalized," said Natalie Wing of Fresno, Calif. "Integration is the key issue. 'Nonethnic [Mennonite]' refers to social and economic differences as well as cultural differences; we all need to open our hearts and our doors to people who are not like us, while at the same time affirming the Mennonite church."

"When non-whites move into a neighborhood, whites become afraid."

Wilma Bailey

"Euro-Americans are afraid," said Wilma Bailey of Grantham, Pa. "When nonwhites move into a neighborhood, whites become afraid of losing jobs, power and influence and the well-ordered society with which they are familiar.

"But 'Broadening the Vision' gives me hope," said Bailey. "It's a deliberate attempt to make some changes, to prepare for the bold new steps we are making into new territory."

Among the "bold new steps" to which Bailey referred is a new model of MCC U.S. service unit. The unit, to be located in an inner-city context, will include volunteers from that community as well as from the more traditional MCC constituency. The goal of the new model is to promote understanding and acceptance within a multiethnic group working together to serve others.

The board also approved a 1996 budget of $4.48 million U.S.

Self-Help gets new board of directors

Calgary, Alta. (MCC)—The Mennonite Central Committee board voted to change MCC bylaws so that a separate committee can be formed to oversee the operation of Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Self-Help, a nonprofit program of MCC, provides income to Third World people by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America.

MCC chair Phil Rich, Archbold, Ohio, said, "We recommend the formation of an operating board because the MCC executive committee is not set up to provide the business, marketing and product design expertise that Self-Help needs to succeed in today's marketplace."

"The marketplace for artisans' crafts is much more competitive" than it was five years ago, Paul Myers, Self-Help director, told the board. "The exoticness of international crafts has diminished."

David Cressman, board member from Kitchener, Ont., echoed this observation: "Self-Help Crafts Ontario, which lost money in 1995, faces a tough marketplace. To run a business today, we need a sharp business sense."

Self-Help had a deficit of $95,000 U.S. ($130,000 Cdn.) in 1995, after a deficit of $347,000 U.S. ($475,620 Cdn.) in 1994.

MCC will retain full financial responsibility for Self-Help Crafts and will appoint the members of the operating committee.

Budget: The board also approved a Self-Help budget that calls for a 9 percent increase in sales from $6.1 million U.S. ($8.3 million Cdn.) in 1995 to $6.65 million U.S. ($9.1 million Cdn.) in 1996. Self-Help Crafts sales increased 6 percent in 1995.

The current year's growth is projected to come from an increase in sales at new and recently opened shops. In 1995 Self-Help Crafts opened stores in six locations: Richmond, Va.; Hagerstown, Md.; Raleigh, N.C.;

Dayton, Ohio; Washington, D.C., and Boise, Idaho.

In 1995 Self-Help Crafts retail sales in the United States and Canada exceeded $12 million U.S. ($16.5 million Cdn.), providing more than 11,500 full-time jobs for under- and unemployed people in 35 countries.

MMA reports record growth

Goshen, Ind. (MMA)—Mennonite Mutual Aid recorded growth in total assets of 21.9 percent in 1995, the fastest rate of growth in the recent history of the organization. Total assets under management rose from $562 million at the end of 1994 to $685 million in 1995. Total equity increased by $7.2 million. Overall MMA membership increased to approximately 72,000, up from 70,000 one year ago.

MMA management projects total assets will rise to about $785 million by the end of 1996 and to about $1 billion in 1998.

"Results for 1995 are indeed gratifying, as more and more of our constituency takes advantage of MMA's fraternal programs as well as participates in our insurance and financial service plans," said Howard L. Brenneman, MMA president.

Every area of MMA recorded gains in 1995. In MMA Praxis Mutual Funds, assets vaulted from $10.6 million in 1994 to $26.1 million in 1995. The socially responsible mutual funds were introduced Jan. 1, 1994, and have been popular among small investors. This was especially true for the MMA Praxis Growth Fund, which enjoyed a return of 33.3 percent in 1995. The MMA Praxis Intermediate Income Fund returned 17.5 percent.

The use of MMA's fraternal benefit programs continued its upward pace in 1995, rising from $2.3 million in 1994 to $2.8 million in 1995. The largest fraternal benefit program, the Sharing Funds, provided more than $1.6 million in matching grants to needs in local congregations. This is up from $1.1 million a year ago. More than 750 congregations benefited from these programs.

MMA paid nearly $20 million in medical bills for members of health insurance plans during 1995, and total health membership rose to about 54,000. Members of MMA Medicare supplement plans saw minimal premium increases at a time when most major carriers are reporting increases of up to 20 and 30 percent.

Church members purchased $17.6 million in new MMA annuities during 1995. Account values rose from $109.4 million to $127 million.

Total assets for Mennonite Retirement Trust, the retirement plan for pastors and church workers, rose to nearly $112 million in 1995, and the number of participants increased to 7,895. The fund reported a return of 18.65 percent for the year.

Mennonite Auto Aid reported a gain of more than $190,000, with more than 25,000 vehicles enrolled.

MDS uses new technology, barely makes budget

Reedley, Calif. (MCC)—At Mennonite Disaster Service's all-unit meeting here Feb. 9-10, executive director Lowell Detweiler introduced new ways MDS is using technology to improve communication.

A toll-free number (1-800-241-8111) offers recorded updates on current projects and needs, and MDS has its own Internet e-mail system called MDSNET. Personnel and resource coordinator Carla Hunt invited delegates to sign up to receive a biweekly fax update of needs. People who joined the fax network received a laminated sign for posting the faxes in churches and businesses.

A serious concern of MDS in 1995 was funding, reported MDS board secretary Lynette Meck. MDS's expansion of staff during a time of new opportunities and increased donations put them in a difficult position as donations dropped toward the end of 1995.

"With big storms like hurricanes Andrew and Hugo and the Midwest floods the news media did our fundraising for us," pointed out Region I director Paul Brubacher, "but suddenly the news media weren't there. We had silent disasters." The board decided to make an unprecedented appeal for funds last December.

"We had set a goal of needing $100,000 by the end of the year," said Brubacher. They saw the goal met, and by the end of January contributions totalled $206,000, far beyond their goal.

The Canadian government decided Jan. 17 not to produce or use land mines. Canada has not been producing land mines. The commitment not to begin to do so places the Canadian delegation to the Geneva "Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons" in a better position to work for an international ban on such weapons.

• • •

The Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of Fresno, Calif., will host a training seminar on how to initiate a church-based VORP, April 10-12 in Fresno. For information, contact Elaine Enns at 1-800-909-VORP.

• • •

Participants at a conference on "Building Communities of Compassion," held Jan. 26-29 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., defined some ideal characteristics of mutual aid. The group said mutual aid should be offered in a community of believers; it is not charity; it assumes that when people have needs, they can expect others to respond; it is not directly reciprocal but has a ripple effect.

• • •

Heads of Canada's international aid groups discussed the challenges of development work at the Canadian Council for International Cooperation. They discussed how to meet growing demands by their donors for direct accountability while meeting Third World desires that may not neatly fit the donors' gauges of success. "In the old days people didn't seem to need a lot of information about how we used their donations," says Marvin Frey, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada. "Today people want a greater say over and understanding of how their donations are used. ... People in the developing world ... say we need to be less patronizing and more trusting."

A retreat for families who cope with long-term mental illness will be held May 10-12 at Amigo Center, Sturgis, Mich. The event is co-sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid and the Christian Reformed Church. Register by April 15 by calling the MMA advocacy department at 1-800-348-7468. For further information contact Crystal Horning, 1-800-442-7930.

* * *

The Mennonite Health Assembly will be held March 21-24 at the Hyatt Regency Woodfield, Schaumburg, Ill. The theme will be "Caring and Healing in Our Fragmented Worlds." For information or to register, contact Dean Preheim-Bartel at 1-800-348-7468.

* * *

"I felt like I was being attacked by love from the minute I opened the box," a Bosnian refugee commented after receiving a Mennonite Central Committee refugee kit. The kits, a new MCC project begun last August, each contain 17 items for personal care and hygiene—multivitamins, laundry detergent, bath towels, toothpaste and other necessities. Last December, some 3,870 kits were shipped to MCC partner agencies in the former Yugoslavia for distribution to refugees in Bosnia and Serbia. MCC continues to accept refugee kits and cash for ongoing shipments to the former Yugoslavia.

* * *

The first Hispanic Anabaptist Consultation of North America will be held in Miami May 2-4. Its theme is "Anabaptist Unity and Renewal." The conference is sponsored by the Peace Education office of Peace and Justice Ministries of Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and was planned by a committee of Hispanic leaders and MCC U.S. staff. For information about registration, call Debra Gingerich at MCC U.S., (717) 859-3889 or Frantz S. Iago-Peretz via e-mail fip@mcc.org.

Conference focuses on adult education

Pasadena, Calif. (GCMC/MC)—At a Feb. 9-11 conference here, Mennonite educators from the United States and Canada were challenged to approach their work with missionary zeal.

"Hollywood is just down the road. Whether it is a movie like *Places in the Heart* or *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, Hollywood cares about values. Do we care?" asked Jeff Wright, Upland, Calif.

"We need to do whatever it takes to call people to faith. Christian education is a missions enterprise at heart," he said.

The event, which focused on adult education, was sponsored by the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church, and Mennonite Publishing House. A total of 47 educators representing congregations, area conferences or institutions attended.

Featured speaker Sara Wenger Shenk observed that "Christian education used to be done in a religion-infused culture. We used to be able to ride on a deep, cultural current that was biblically literate."

Today, however, Christians need to be "counterculture" if they want to have a relevant witness, said Shenk, who is assistant dean and assistant professor of Christian education at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

She encouraged the participants to use the following principles for shaping adult education programs:

- build communities by creating settings and processes that feel hospitable,
- show the way toward personal and social transformation,
- use stages of adult life as opportunities to grow in maturity of faith,
- teach skills for understanding and internalizing the faith story so it becomes formative,
- create communities of conviction and character.

"We have to touch the center of people's lives," said Shenk, noting that for many Mennonites the church is not a place where they feel they can ask questions or express emotions such as anger. "Our God is too big to be threatened by questions."

Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind., observed that while Mennonites have traditionally had a focus on community, members still find it hard to talk openly about certain issues. "I cannot raise questions about human sexuality, particularly homosexuality, in my own church, and that is a source of pain for

MIRRORING THE MARTYRS

Carla Reimer

Fun and games: *Stan Shantz (left), Glendale, Ariz., tests Monica Schroeder's knowledge of Mennonite adult education resources as part of a skit produced by Faith & Life Press. Schroeder, Telford, Pa., won a prize for identifying the right answer to a question from the Mirroring the Martyrs category. Anna Rehan, Langham, Sask., holds the category sign.*

me," she said.

"What are we when we feel we can't slip up [in the church]?" said Ilene Bergen, Kitchener, Ont., acknowledging that for her, it would take a "huge change to think of the church as a safe place."

A number expressed interest in a common curriculum for adults, similar to what is provided to children through the Jubilee curriculum.

Yet, they agreed, the reality is that many adults want to choose what they study. In fact, Everett Thomas, Elkhart, Ind., pointed out that often Sunday school classes opt to study an elective instead of the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, which is published by the two denominations.

Throughout the conference, the participants expressed their frustration over the lack of successful models for Christian education.

Shirley Grove, Kitchener, Ont., said that in her congregation, only about 20 to 30 percent of adults attend Sunday school. "A lot of people have busy work schedules. They can't absorb more information on Sunday morning. They see the Sunday school as a time for reconnecting with people," she said.

However, Bergen said, people find the time and energy for other classes such as computer training. "This speaks volumes about how valuable Christian education is," she said.

> **"We need to do whatever it takes to call people to faith."**
>
> ***Jeff Wright***

David Hiebert, Scottdale, Pa., spoke in favor of developing age-specific resources for adults. He said that at this time in his life he is dealing with the death of his parents.

Several noted that their churches had found that adults often were more willing to attend a Bible study class during the week than on Sunday morning.

During the closing worship, Ken Hawkley, Powell, Ohio, challenged the educators to continue to look at their work in new ways.

The event ended with the reading of a litany that stated in part the following: "We recommit ourselves to the teaching ministry; we promise to love and care for all the adults in our congregations; we desire a fresh passion for God's Word." *Carla Reimer*

Guete resigns from CHM

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Marco Guete, Hesston, Kan., has resigned as resource ministries director for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) effective June 30.

Guete

Guete and his wife, Sandra, have accepted an assignment in Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, with the GC Commission on Overseas Mission beginning mid-September. Both are originally from Colombia.

Marco will work as the director of Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center, (CLARA). One of CLARA's primary goals is to provide Anabaptist material in Spanish and Portuguese to countries in Central America, South America and North America. Sandra's job description is currently being developed by the Colombia Mennonite Church.

The Guetes belong to the Inter-Mennonite Fellowship in Hesston. They have three adult children—Zandra, Javier and Vanessa.

Guete has worked for close to 10 years for CHM, primarily in the area of Hispanic ministries. Prior to that, he served as a part-time volunteer with CHM for four years.

The Hispanic ministries program has grown significantly since Guete first began his job. In 1988 he initiated a Spanish curriculum program called the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, which has been used by over 300 Hispanics in North America. The number of GC Hispanic Mennonite churches has increased to 26.

Guete is looking forward to living in his home country again. "Here, I am in an Anglo culture. I am out of my context. In Colombia, I will be in my culture and be able to use Spanish 90 percent of the time," he said.

The Latin Bible that Martin Luther used for translating the holy book into German has been found by a librarian in Stuttgart, Germany. The volume, which had been lost for 200 years, is signed by Luther and covered with notes made during the translation process. (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

North Koreans suffering from hunger will soon receive food from Mennonite Central Committee. The agency will contribute $86,500 U.S. ($120,000 Cdn.) toward a purchase of 1,000 metric tons of rice, valued at $473,000 U.S. ($600,000 Cdn.). The rice will be purchased in Hong Kong for distribution in North Korea, where an estimated 130,000 people are on the brink of starvation. The food should arrive this month. The emergency is the result of severe flooding last summer, which made an already deteriorating food supply situation worse. Last summer rainfall in North Korea was 250 percent above normal in some parts of the country, with 40 percent of arable land flooded.

• • •

German chancellor Helmut Kohl has thanked Mennonites for their role in post-war Germany in a congratulatory note to Mennonite Central Committee on its 75th anniversary, reports *Die Brucke*. "We Germans have much reason for gratitude that after overcoming the Nazi dictatorship, the hand of reconciliation was extended to us in such a clear way." German Mennonites also sent a thank-you letter to MCC for its work after the war. In the letter, spokesperson Diether Lichdi wrote that the most important stimulus that MCC gave to Mennonites in post-war Germany was "reminding Mennonites in Germany of the peace witness that they had given up." (*Gospel Herald*)

Record

Lutheran ministers in Minnesota are suing their denomination for not investing in South Africa. The Minnesota Supreme Court refused to review a lower court's dismissal of the suit against the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but Rev. Thomas L. Basich of St. Paul spoke for the plaintiffs, saying the group has "no intention whatsoever of accepting the Supreme Court's abdication of their duty as the final word" and saying they will consider an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The ministers are challenging a policy of the denomination's Board of Pensions that barred investments in companies doing business in South Africa. The ministers contend that the fund lost money because of the investment restrictions and that those losses could affect the ministers' potential retirement income. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Americans know little about their government, and ignorance makes them cynical. That is the conclusion drawn by *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* following a study conducted by the *Post*, the Kaiser Family Foundation and Harvard University. The study found, among other statistics of ignorance, that four in 10 Americans did not know who their vice president was. Only 24 percent knew the names of both of their U.S. senators. The survey also found that less informed Americans are far more likely to believe their country is in decline. They consistently say the country's biggest problems have worsened in recent decades, including problems such as air and water quality, which have improved. The newspaper's report says, "Less informed Americans are more inclined to see the world as an especially cold and threatening place, a view that directly shapes their attitudes toward defense spending and America's place in foreign affairs."

MINISTERS

Stephen (Tig) Intagliata was ordained as pastor at San Antonio (Texas) Church Feb. 25.

Robert Kaufman was licensed as pastor at First Church, Moundridge, Kan., Feb. 18.

Ann Nofziger was licensed Oct. 29, 1995, as pastor at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.

Milo Nussbaum is interim pastor at Calvary Church, Washington, Ill.

Sig Polle is conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Ingrid Schultz was ordained Oct. 15, 1995, as pastor at Comunidad de Fe Mennonite Church, Chicago.

Jeni Hiett Umble was licensed and installed as associate pastor at Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 1, 1995.

WORKERS

A. Bohn

Anita and **Stan Bohn**, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., have begun three-year MCC terms in Kingston, Jamaica, at Jamaica Theological Seminary. Anita will serve in a variety of positions, and Stan will teach.

Helen Braun, Bergthaler Church, Altona, Man., is beginning a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a returns clerk in the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Clair and **Faye Brenneman**, Mountain Community Church, Palmer Lake, Colo., are beginning four-year MCC terms in April in Indonesia as country co-representatives and in community development.

Martina G. Burka, Petitcodiac (N.B.) Church, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a store clerk with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Samuel Frey Diller, Community Church, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Miami as a community organizer with Little Haiti Housing Association.

Barbara and **Mark Ewert**, Gospel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., are beginning two-year MCC terms in Siksika, Alta., working in community development.

Thaddeus A. Hostetler, Portland (Ore.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Hanoi, Vietnam, as a business consultant.

Lorene Kaufman, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., began a two-year MCC term in November 1995, in North Newton, Kan., as workroom supervisor of the Material Resource Center.

Elma and **Jona Leppky**, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., working with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

S. Bohn

Braun

C. Brenneman

F. Brenneman

Burka

B. Ewert

M. Ewert

Kaufman

E. Leppky

J. Leppky

Allen and **Sara Lind**, Goessel (Kan.) Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Brazil. Allen will be serving as a disabilities worker for adults and Sara as a health worker.

Greg and **Tamara Awad Lobe**, Waterloo (Ont.) North Church and First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Beni Suef, Egypt, teaching English with the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Ruth Martin, Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in September 1995 in New Hamburg as coordinating manager of the New Hamburg Thrift Shop.

Jon Penner, Akron (Pa.) Church, began a one-year MCC term in September 1995, in Akron, as a packing clerk. He was previously employed by MCC as a stocking clerk.

Bertha and **Herman Toevs**, Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kan., are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., working with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

A. Lind

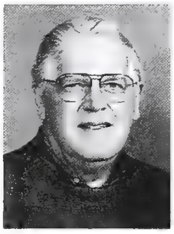
S. Lind

G. Awad Lobe

T. Awad Lobe

Martin

B. Toevs


H. Toevs

Goshen College announces a 1/2- to 3/4-time faculty opening in **acute-care nursing** beginning fall 1996. Doctoral preparation preferred. Master's degree in nursing required. Goshen College is an affirmative-action equal opportunity employer committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.** Applications will be received until position is filled. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Wanted: administrator for small inner-city community center; business administration training or experience. Also, **youth worker** for young teens to young adults. Plan activities, Bible studies, evangelize and be a big brother to youth in their homes and streets. Spanish/English a plus.

Apply **by March 31** to **Crossroads Community Center, 2918 N. Sixth St., Philadelphia, PA 19133-2803.**

Harvest help wanted: truck drivers and combine operators. Starting mid-May and ending late August or mid-September.

Call **Lance Martens at (316) 543-2851.**

Overseas Teaching Opportunities

with the Commission on Overseas Mission

English (ESL) in Japan and China

missionary children in West Africa

Bible classes in Lesotho

theology in Bolivia

P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

M.A. in Counseling

M.A. in Conflict Analysis & Transformation

M.A. in Education

Eastern Mennonite Seminary
- master of divinity
- master of arts in church leadership
- master of arts in religion

For more information, call Don Yoder toll-free at 800-368-2665.

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Mennonite or Amish **pen pals** wanted. Write to **Quen, RR 2, Box 276, Bayard, NE 69334.**

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track position in **education** beginning in fall 1996. Rank dependent on qualifications. ABD considered; doctorate preferred. The successful candidate will hold an advanced degree in elementary education; evidence of effective teaching crucial and graduate-level teaching preferred. Responsibilities include teaching graduate and undergraduate education courses in foundation, curriculum methods and classroom management, as well as placement and supervision of student teachers. Consideration of applications begins March 1 and continues until an appointment is made.

Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac.

Reunion: Kansas City Mennonite Children's Home. All former employees of the Mennonite Children's Home in Kansas City are invited to a reunion to be held in Kansas City on **Aug. 9-11, 1996.**

For information contact **Karl Wenger, 5316 Outlook, Mission, KS 66202.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Mennonite Conciliation Service staff associate** in Akron, Pa. This three-year, full-time volunteer position is available June 1996. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants should have basic training and experience in dispute resolution/mediation; organizing, managing information systems and word processing skills; newsletter production experience; well-developed writing, speaking, reflective listening and problem-solving skills.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151.** In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel Services, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.** Applications due **April 30.**

Reviews

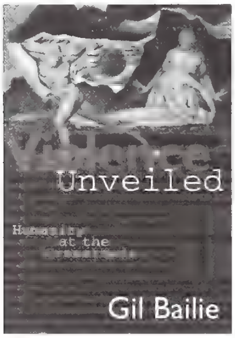
BOOKS

SACRED VICTIMS

Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads *by Gil Bailie (Crossroad, 1995, 293 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

This book offers a unique, thought-provoking perspective on the Christian gospel's effect on contemporary and historical violence. Drawing on the work of Rene Girard, Bailie develops the thesis that throughout human history violence "incites more violence" but that the message of Jesus on the cross serves as a counter to that spiral of violence. He shows that "the empathy for victims—*as victims*—is specifically Western and quintessentially biblical."



At a time when the Western Christian tradition receives more than its share of criticism, Bailie argues that the heart of the Christian message—Jesus' death on the cross—is our only hope in overcoming the prince of this world, the lie that justice will come through the exercise of violence.

Bailie uses contemporary illustrations to show how "human history is the relentless chronicle of violence that it is because when cultures fall apart they fall into violence, and when they revive themselves they do so violently." Our human tendency, he says, is to sacralize violence and scapegoat victims so that our society will be strengthened. But the opposite happens. Violence begets more violence.

Bailie urges us to cling to Jesus' message, to his example of giving himself up to die, to become a victim so that all may live. That act of self-sacrifice has had the effect of inducing empathy for victims. Instead of war or violence being made sacred, the victim becomes sacred. Otherwise we die in the spiral of violence.

Though not an easy book, it is stimulating for those who stay with it. It would make a good tool for discussion in a group willing to work at it.

CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM DIALOGUE

Ishmael, My Brother: A Christian Introduction to Islam, *compiled by Anne Cooper (MARC, 1993, 317 pages);* **Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road**, *edited by J. Dudley Woodberry (MARC, 1989, 394 pages); and* **Religion, Law and Society: A Christian-Muslim Discussion**, *edited by Tarek Mitri (World Council of Churches, 1995, 138 pages)*

Reviewed by Alain Epp Weaver, Jerusalem

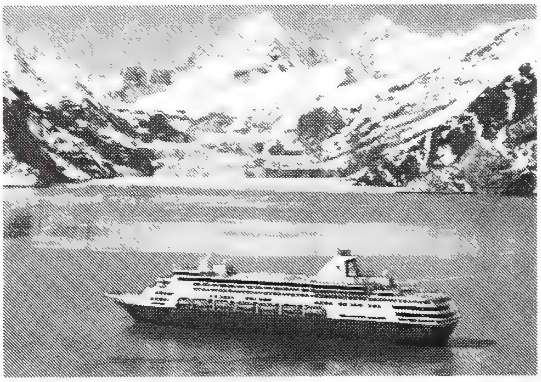
Stereotypes of Arabs on TV and film, racist, anti-Arab sentiments bandied about in public, and articles in foreign policy journals portending a clash between "Western" and "Islamic" civilizations all attest that Islam has replaced communism as the West's chosen demon. As people committed to Christ's way of love, Mennonites and other Christians should be suspicious of such demonization.

Three recent books can serve to give the reader an understanding of Islam and Muslims that goes beyond stereotypes and vilification.

Ishmael, My Brother aims to give an introduction to Islam. Islamic beliefs practices, history and contemporary reality are all covered in this book. For an introduction, the breadth of the material covered is impressive. A "Christian" introduction to Islam, the book includes study questions and activities that encourage the reader to think about how the material relates to Christian faith and how a Christian witness to Muslims might look. Perhaps too long for a Sunday school course, *Ishmael, My Brother* would be a good reference for North Americans interested in a simple, accessible introduction to Muslims and their beliefs.

The essays in *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road* are the product of a conference sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization held in Holland in 1987. The editor, J. Dudley Woodberry, has done a great service by preparing for publication these reflections by missionaries in Muslim contexts. The contributors reflect on the scriptural basis of witness to Muslims, the practical forms such witness takes, and the contextualization of the gospel message in Muslim societies. The book is especially valuable for its annotated bibliography on Islam. David W. Shenk, the director of Eastern Mennonite Missions, has a helpful introductory essay that summarizes the

TOURMAGINATION offers New Tour...



ALASKA '96

Enjoy majestic beauty: shimmering glaciers, deep fjords, soaring eagles, thundering caribou, 1,000-mile cruise and much more with Mennonite friends from all over North America.

Call Today
1-800-565-0451
(US & Canada) for a brochure

Ask about our other tours: Mexico, Jamaica, Australia/New Zealand, Vienna, Europe

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg.# 1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

conference's findings. Christians working in Muslim contexts would benefit from this book. I confess that I was disappointed with the book's misleading title, which suggests a collection of essays by Christians *and* Muslims, a collaborative exploration by members of the two faith communities.

Fortunately, another recent book, *Religion, Law and Society*, does contain such reflections. The production of Christian-Muslim colloquia sponsored by the World Council of Churches, *Religion, Law and Society* is not for the beginning student of Islam. Muslim and Christian scholars discuss modernity and secularism as they relate to Islamic political, social and legal categories, such as "Shari'ah," "Fiqh," and "Ijtihad." The explorations by Muslim scholars of "Shari'ah" (the "road" or "way" of Islamic law) do much to dispel Western stereotypes of Islamic law. Conflicts between Muslim and Christian understandings of the religion-law-society relationship are not papered over; instead the contributors thoughtfully engage each other and the texts and histories of the two faiths. I strongly recommend this book to anyone with previous study of Islam interested in church/mosque-state issues.

MEDITATIONS ON ILLNESS

From Grim to Green Pastures *by Richard L. Morgan (Upper Room Books, 1994, 190 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Reusser Pauls, McPherson, Kan.

Richard L. Morgan began formulating ideas for this book of meditations for the sick and their caregivers while personally experiencing serious illness and recovery. He found that convalescence is a tedious process, and often he wished for a devotional book that would offer him spiritual comfort. Since no such book seemed available, Morgan kept a journal of his experiences and later compiled his writing into a book.

"When we experience the healing that comes from others who have 'been there' and can touch us with genuine empathy," says Morgan, "then we can reach out as healed victims to help others."

From Grim to Green Pastures is a compilation of meditations that speak to the mental and emotional trauma of those experiencing illness and reflect on the lessons to be learned from sickness. The devotionals are short and each has a suggested Scripture text included along with biblical illustrations. It is not a book to be read in its entirety but rather one meditation at a time, taking the opportunity to absorb and apply its meaning.

From Grim to Green Pastures
Richard L. Morgan

For a person who is in good health, this book may not seem particularly relevant, but Morgan points out that, as an ancient Greek writer observed, "there is no mortal whom sorrow and disease do not touch." Morgan concludes that someday all of us will walk into the grim pastures. We just need to remember that God's love and care also can be found—in the green pastures.

Resources

- **Stop the Violence** is a set of eight radio public service announcements produced by Mennonite Board of Missions that address the violence in our society and offer ways people can reduce violence. The spots are available to churches for use in local outreach. For information and a free copy of the radio spots call MBM at 1-800-999-3534.
- **Abigail** by James R. Shott (Herald Press, 1996, $8.95 U.S./$12.80 Cdn.) is the seventh in the "People of the Promise" series that brings men and women of the Old Testament to life.
- **Godward: Personal Stories of Grace**, edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.), shares stories of how some Mennonite Christian leaders have been touched and changed by God.
- **What We Have Tasted** is the newest recording from the Reunion Vocal Band, a fellowship of Mennonite musicians from Canada and the United States. Order from Reunion Vocal Band, 411 Lake St., Ephrata, PA 17522-2659; audiocassettes $10 U.S.; CDs $15 U.S.
- **Together We Can** is an 8-minute video about Mennonite Central Committee's mobile meat canner. For free loan from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381, or your nearest MCC office.
- **Angels Unawares** by Megan McKenna (Orbis, 1995, $10.95 U.S.) portrays angels as "special friends of the imprisoned, the endangered, the persecuted and those who preach the good news."
- **Visionaries** by Bill Mosher (Orbis, 1995, $17.95 U.S.) is a companion volume to a public television series that explores what happens when people help one another.
- **There Is a Season** by Joan Chittister, art by John August Swanson (Orbis, 1995, $29.95 U.S.), is a meditation in words and art on the passage in Ecclesiastes.
- **The Fire in the Equations: Science, Religion and the Search for God** by Kitty Ferguson (Eerdmans, 1995, $25 U.S.) challenges us to rethink our search for truth about ourselves, our origins and our destiny.
- **In Praise of Virtue: An Exploration of the Biblical Virtues in a Christian Context** by Benjamin W. Farley (Eerdmans, 1995, $13 U.S.) explores the virtues of the Old and New Testaments and their relevance to Christian life today.
- **Satanic Ritual Abuse: Principles of Treatment** by Colin A. Ross, M.D. (University of Toronto Press, 1995, $16.95 Cdn.), provides guidelines for therapeutic interventions that avoid extremes of belief or skepticism, a wider context for discussion, and describes the clinical reality of satanic ritual abuse cases.
- **The Parable of Joy: Reflections on the Wisdom of the Book of John** by Michael Card (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995, $19.99 U.S.) offers Card's translation of John's passages, along with study notes.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 496
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

All shook up

The Bible has "the power to shake us up," says Jack Dyck in the article on pages 6-7 in this issue. But we must invite the Holy Spirit to do the shaking; we must be willing to do the work of understanding the Scriptures, and the goal of our being shaken up should be compassion, or good works.

Last Saturday (Feb. 24) I led a half-day Lenten retreat in my congregation. Using the outline found in the Lent resource called *O That Today You Would Hear God's Voice* (available from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484, see our Feb. 13 issue, page 9), we spent time reflecting in silence on the story of Jesus raising Lazarus (John 11:1-44).

We looked at this story in three different 30- to 40-minute sessions, first from the point of view of Mary and Martha, then from Jesus' perspective, and finally from Lazarus' point of view. This exercise renewed my faith in the power of God's Word, not to mention the rich blessing of silence in our noise-filled world.

I was, I thought, familiar with this passage, having studied it more than once. Yet I encountered new insights, not only into the characters in the story but into myself and how I am like and unlike these characters. I gained a renewed appreciation of the transforming nature of Bible reading and study.

The Bible is an important tool in helping us renew our minds and discern God's will.

There are various ways to approach Scripture. One is analytical study, which offers many rewards, including a better understanding of what life was like at the time of the events we are reading about. Another is what is traditionally called "Lectio Divina," which involves meditating on Scripture as a way to move into deeper prayer or contemplation.

Another approach, which needs to precede either of these two, is simply reading the Bible and gaining an understanding of its overall sweep. This is a lifelong process and requires many readings. It may begin in childhood, as we learn some of the major stories in the Bible, then increase as we continue reading and rereading.

This year I've begun a program of reading through the Bible in two years, which involves reading a chapter or two each day. I've been impressed with the sense of newness in the text, even as I read familiar stories. And the daily reading keeps my thoughts more attuned to the biblical story, which tells of God's presence in the world. I find myself looking for that Presence more often in my day.

Reprove and correct: An oft-quoted text is 2 Timothy 3:16, which says that Scripture (which for the writer meant what we call the Old Testament) "is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." Some people read this as a reason to reprove and correct others, and it certainly includes that meaning. But it also calls us to use the Scripture to reprove and correct ourselves. That's what I experienced as I meditated on John 11 at the retreat. The Holy Spirit used the Scripture to speak to me about how to be more compassionate.

Another text reinforces this message. Romans 12:1-2 calls us to "be transformed by the renewing of [our] minds" in order to discern the "good and acceptable and perfect" will of God. The Bible is an important tool in helping us renew our minds and discern God's will.

Yet this tool is to be used in the context of the church. Paul follows his statement about renewing our minds with a section on our being "one body in Christ" (v. 5) with many gifts. And he warns us "not to think of [ourselves] more highly than [we] ought to think, but to think with sober judgment" (v. 3).

"The Bible is the essential book of the church," says our Confession of Faith. Scripture says it is to be used "for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16b-17). It is not to be used as a weapon to beat down others.

Our Confession of Faith calls us to "commit ourselves to persist and delight in reading, studying and meditating on the Scriptures." Let us work at understanding the Bible and invite the Holy Spirit to shake us up so that we may be more compassionate and do good works. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

Inside

The Passion / p. 8
You can bring light to death row / p. 10
God wants justice, ercy and humility / p. 11

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 06
MARCH 26, 1996

MAR 27 '96
ELKH
LIBRARY

The promise of resurrection

- The resurrection: promise of a new body (page 3)
- The agony of Easter (page 5)
- Plotting the resurrection (page 6)

Dan Epp-Tiessen with his son Timothy

Prologue

The Easter event is at the center of our faith. As Paul writes, "If Christ has not been raised, then your faith is a delusion and you are still lost in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17).

Christ's resurrection has numerous implications for us. One of these, as Dan Epp-Tiessen discovered, partly through his son Timothy, is the promise of a new body (page 3).

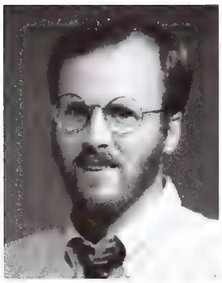
Poetry helps us remember the experiences of Holy Week, and in this issue we offer three poems (pages 5 and 8), plus a reflection on Christ's Passion (page 8).

Kenneth Gibble helps us look at what it means to be "plotters of resurrection" (page 6). While resurrection is God's work, there are ways we can join in that work.

Michael B. Ross writes from death row about the need for people to write prisoners who are facing death (page 10).

Mitchell Brown (page 11) looks at what he sees as central aspects of our faith: justice, mercy and humility.

Irene and Jack Suderman (page 12) have traveled around Canada and the United States visiting congregations. As they talk about the Colombian Mennonite Church, Mennonites here often express a feeling of despair. The Sudermans offer lessons for us from the Colombian church.



Be a plotter of resurrection this Easter. *gh*

Next issue: A biblical spirituality of peace

Cover: Photo supplied by the Epp-Tiessen family

Contents

FEATURES

3 The resurrection: promise of a new body

A student and his own son taught the author about the power of the New Testament image of the resurrection of the body.

5 palm sunday

The agony of Easter

6 Plotting the resurrection

Three ways we can join in God's work of bringing resurrection to a world in the grasp of death

8 The Passion

The crucified

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters

10 Speaking out

11 Bible

12 Profile

13 News

21 Record

22 Reviews

24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Larry Penner
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www:southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

A student and his own son taught the author about the power of the New Testament image of the resurrection of the body.

The resurrection:

promise of a new body

Dan Epp-Tiessen

Last Easter was a particularly emotional and painful one for me, but it was also a meaningful one. It was the first Easter since our 8-year-old son Timothy died of a brain tumor in October 1994.

Easter Sunday is the day we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. It is also a day on which we anticipate the resurrection of our own bodies after we have faced the final enemy.

As Paul claims in 1 Corinthians 15:12, 20-22: "Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? … But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ."

Paul's basic argument in this passage is that Christ's resurrection from the dead constitutes God's promise that we, too, will experience a similar resurrection some day.

Images of life beyond death: The New Testament uses a variety of images to portray life beyond death. How else can one talk about the indescribable experience of living in God's presence, except through images that convey but a partial picture of what this glorious life will be like?

Two personal experiences have combined to make the New Testament image of resurrection of the body a particularly powerful one for me.

The first experience occurred a number of years ago while I was teaching a course at Conrad Grebel College called "Introduction to the Old Testament."

During one particular class we were discussing the topic of ancient Israelite views of life after death. I made the point that the Israelites could not conceive of human life without a physical body. Therefore, late in the Old Testament period, when the belief in life after death first arose, this conviction was articulated in terms of the resurrection of the body.

This stands in sharp contrast to the Greek idea, also found in the New Testament, that we human beings are made up of body and soul, and at death the immortal soul is freed from the shackles of our earthly bodies.

During our class break time, the conversation about different views of life after death continued with myself and

Easter Sunday is a day on which we anticipate the resurrection of our own bodies after we have faced the final enemy.

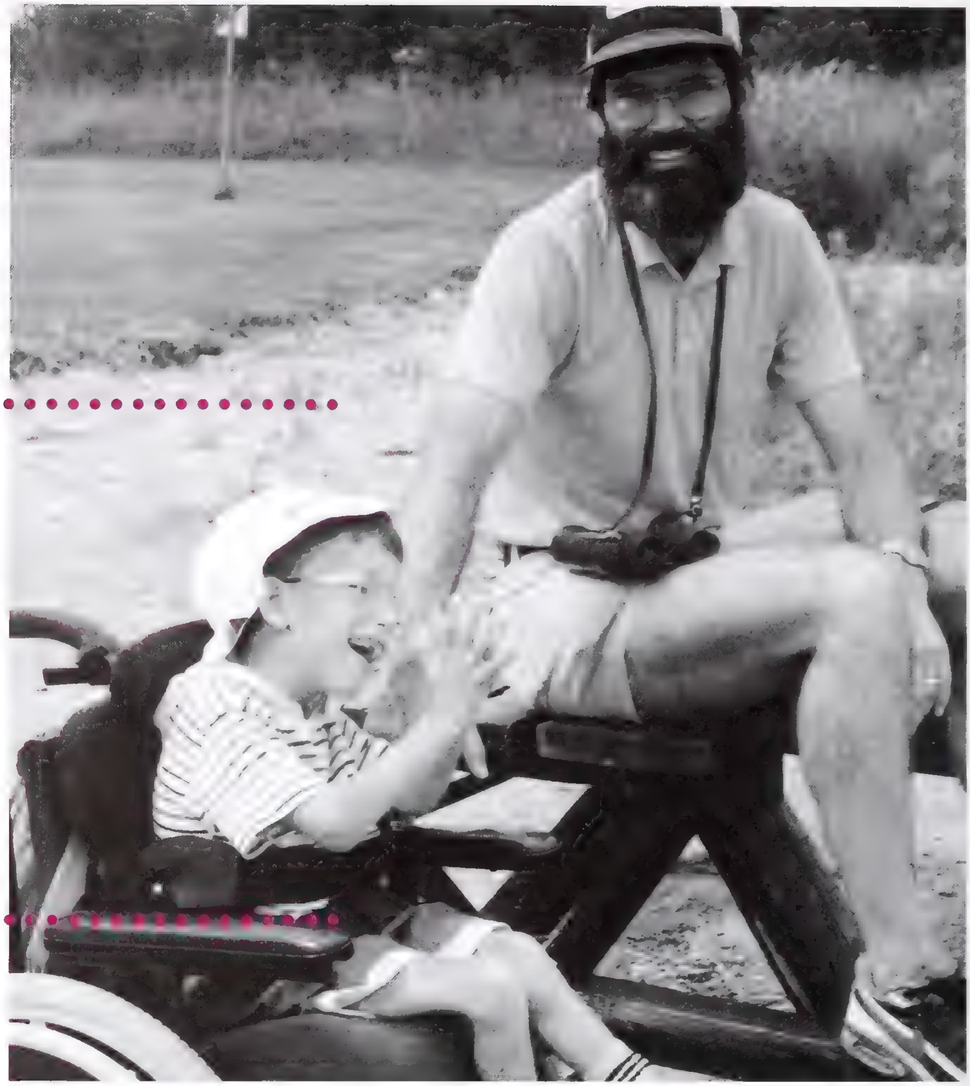


Photo supplied by author

A delightful, happy child: *Timothy and Dan Epp-Tiessen*

At Easter, amid my tears at Tim's absence, I thank God for the resurrection of Jesus.

several students.

One of these students was a young man who suffered from a rare congenital condition that had prevented his body from growing as it should have. As a result, his body was small and fragile; he had little use of his legs, and he talked with difficulty. Despite or perhaps because of these limitations, this fellow had developed a wonderful personality and a deep personal faith.

His comments are ones I will never forget. He stated that for him the belief in the resurrection of the body was particularly meaningful because it meant that some day he would have a new body, and then he would be able to run and jump and play like other people. What a marvelous image of the kind of life God has in store for us!

The second experience that has made belief in the resurrection of the dead so powerful for me is the death of our son Timothy.

A delightful, happy child: Tim was a delightful, happy child, but his body had many limitations. These were a result of cerebral palsy, his original bout with cancer five years ago, the ravages of radiation and chemotherapy, and a stroke at age 4 that left him blind and diminished his mental and physical abilities.

The promise of resurrection

But now Tim has a new body. He can see the tulips and daffodils in heaven. He can again enjoy what was once one of his favorite pastimes, looking at picture books. Tim can now run and jump and play games. No longer will the other children run away to play elsewhere and leave him behind by himself, asking for someone to come and play with him.

At Easter, amid my tears at Tim's absence, I thank God for the resurrection of Jesus. I thank God for Tim's resurrection. And I thank God for the promise that some day each of us will have a new body.

Dan Epp-Tiessen teaches Old Testament studies part-time at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., and McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., is a part-time homemaker and a part-time truck driver. This article first appeared in Mennonite Reporter, *April 3, 1995.*

palm sunday

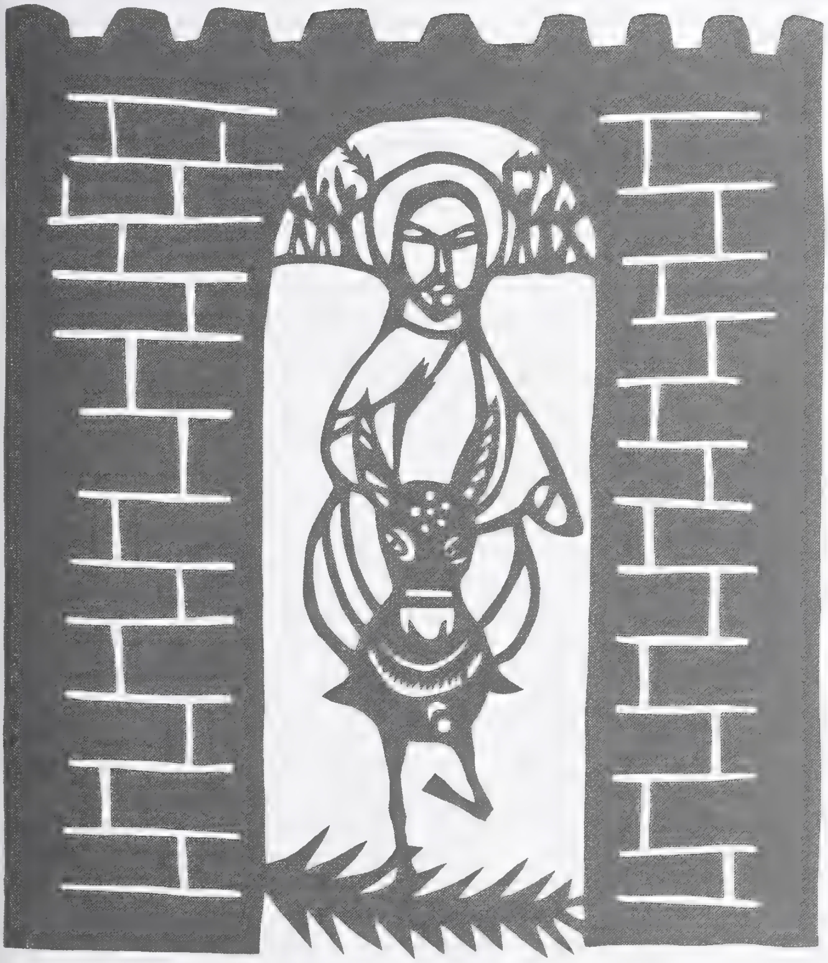
Menno Wiebe

the people's king wasn't seen
riding high upon a royal horse
but on a borrowed nursing burro
rag tag twelve form the entourage

palm branches
muffling clattering hooves
upon the hardened city streets
pomp and power waved
as the ritual route to royalty

the kingdom didn't get declared
in tailored eloquence
within the temple square
the stones' own stories of lament
were put on hold
for telling at a later date
instead
children who perceived divine
assent
utter shouts unstoppable
for coronation of the heart

Menno Wiebe is Native Concerns director for Mennonite Central Committee Canada in Winnipeg.



Nanjing Theological Seminary

The agony of Easter

Diane Mierau Buller

Judas:
I wish I could tell you how my heart ached
when I first heard your story.
The Bible is brief concerning your death.
But I know the panic you felt when
you knew you had betrayed your master.
I have felt it myself many times.
Your mind hung by a thread much finer
than the rope you used to hang yourself.
Didn't you know that even then he would
claim you;
that with merely a word or a glance he
would clutch you again to his heart?
There were others who would desert him
and fail to stand by him in his direst hours.
Sometimes I wonder, Judas,
Did your scathing repentance touch him
most of all?

Diane Mierau Buller lives in Henderson, Neb.

Three ways we can join in God's work of bringing resurrection to a world in the grasp of death

Plotting the resurrection

Kenneth L. Gibble

In the last autumn of his wife Katharine's life, the well-known American essayist E.B. White watched her plan the planting of bulbs in her flower garden. He described what he saw: "… the small hunched-over figure, her studied absorption in the implausible notion that there would be yet another spring, oblivious to the ending of her own days, which she knew perfectly well was near at hand, sitting there with her detailed chart under those dark skies in the dying October, calmly plotting the resurrection" (*Onward and Upward in the Garden* by Katharine S. White [Straus and Giroux, 1979]).

"Plotting the resurrection"—what a provocative phrase. In what sense is it possible for human beings to be the plotters of resurrection?

My American Heritage dictionary gives several meanings for the word "plot." One definition is "a small piece of ground, generally used for a specific purpose." Because I enjoy growing vegetables in a small plot of ground behind our house, the specific purpose that comes to my mind is that of gardening.

A second definition for plot has a sinister twist: "a secret plan to accomplish a hostile or illegal purpose; a scheme." Maybe you learned this meaning when you were a child. Your mother overheard you and one of your playmates whispering behind the door. She hunted you down and said in a voice betraying suspicion, "I think the two of you are up to no good. What are you plotting?"

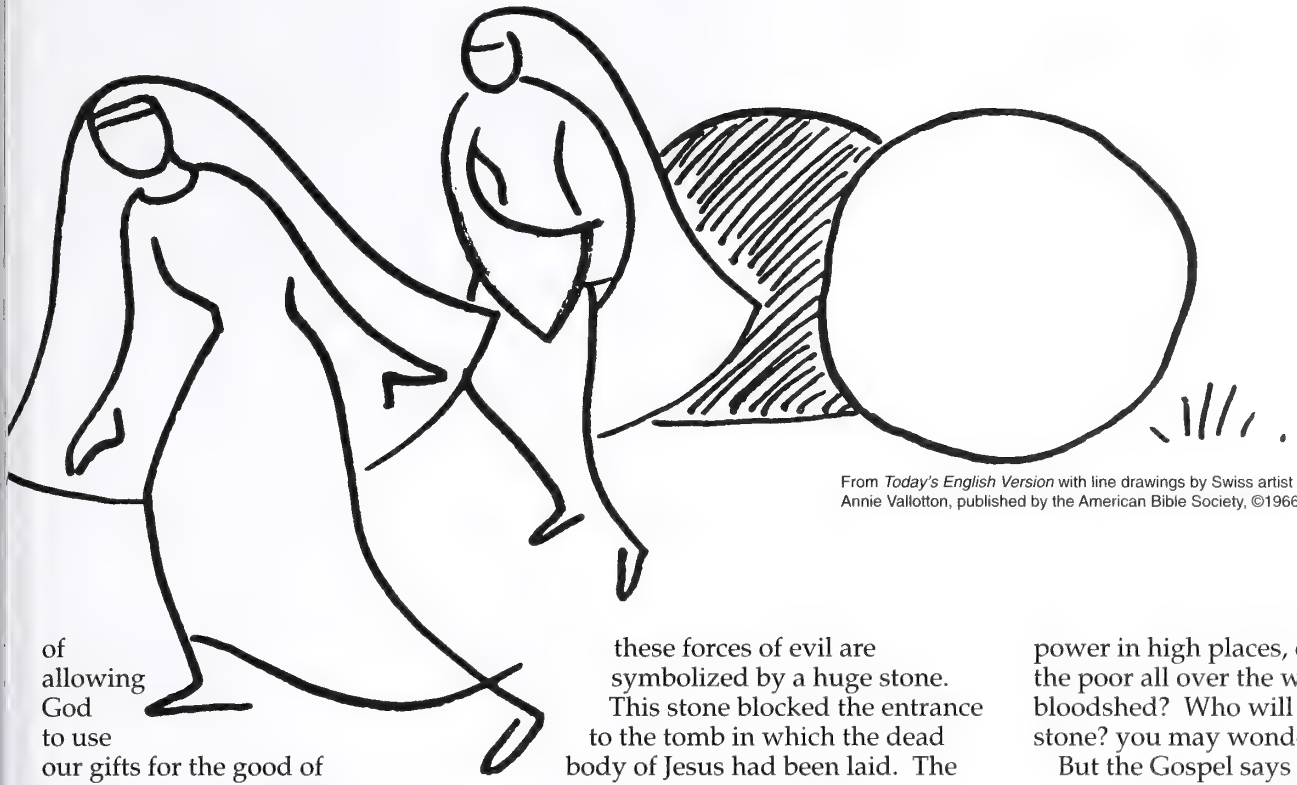
A third definition for plot is "the series of events consisting of an outline of the action of a narrative or drama." This is the definition you learned in school. The teacher said you had to do a book report, and one of the things you had to report on was the plot of the story—the action, the unfolding of events with a beginning, a middle and an end.

Agriculture: Each of these definitions lends its meaning to the idea of "plotting the resurrection." One clue to the meaning of this phrase comes from the Bible. When the apostle Paul wrote about resurrection, he resorted to the language of agriculture. "What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain" (1 Corinthians 15:36-37 NRSV).

It is almost impossible to speak of resurrection without using the image of seeds planted in the ground. When Paul made his attempt to talk about the miracle known as resurrection, he drew on the analogy of a seed that cannot produce life until it dies. The cross must precede the empty tomb. New life requires first a dying.

Each year when springtime arrives, few Christians can see greening grass or bursting buds without associating it with Christ's triumph over the grave. The annual miracle of new life springing from dormant, dead-looking bushes and trees becomes a celebration of the power of the Almighty One, who creates and recreates, who makes all things new.

As you and I drop seeds into our garden plots, we are plotters indeed. We sow the seeds in faith that they will sprout and grow. We know that we cannot make it happen, and we would be foolish to dig up the seed to see if it has begun to sprout. All we can do is plant and wait; God must do the rest. But how important the planting is, and the waiting. This is so whether what we plant be literal seeds in our backyard gardens or figurative seeds such as acts of kindness, teaching our children about truth and beauty, or any one of a thousand ways



From *Today's English Version* with line drawings by Swiss artist Annie Vallotton, published by the American Bible Society, ©1966

of allowing God to use our gifts for the good of the earth and the human family.

Plotting the resurrection. It's sowing seeds. But it's more than that. It's also "a secret plan to accomplish a hostile purpose; a scheme." How does that definition fit what resurrection is all about?

In the crucifixion and raising of Jesus, God was plotting a hostile action indeed. Resurrection is the climax of the Holy One's scheme to overthrow the great enemy we call by various names: hell, death, the grave. In Mark's account of the first Easter, these forces of evil are symbolized by a huge stone.

This stone blocked the entrance to the tomb in which the dead body of Jesus had been laid. The women go to the tomb on that morning with no idea how they will anoint the body of Jesus. They ask each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" The gospel writer underscores their dilemma by telling us that the stone was "very large." The powers of hell, death and the grave seemed invincible to the women, as they still do to us.

Drug addiction: The stone of evil is very large indeed. Do you, as I do, often despair when you hear of so much that is wrong in the world: drug addiction, violent crime, abuse of power in high places, oppression of the poor all over the world, disease, bloodshed? Who will roll away the stone? you may wonder.

But the Gospel says that the women did not despair. They did not stay at home wringing their hands, nor did they tell themselves it was no use to go to the sealed-off tomb. They went with spices for anointing. They went even when all they went with was a question: Who will roll away the stone? And their going was their part in the plot against the forces of evil. They were plotters of resurrection.

What about that last definition of the key word, plot? This is the book-report meaning, plot as the series of actions in a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. And what Easter represents in this plot is the turning point, the climax. With the empty tomb, with the resurrection, you and I know at last how the story will come out. It's going to be a happy ending.

None of us knows the exact details of how the story will conclude, whether it be the story of our own lives or the story of creation. Neither did the writers of the Gospels. But they knew a turning point in a plot when they saw one. They saw it in a stone rolled away and an empty tomb. And they became, in the telling of the story, part of the great company of those who, in times past and in time present, have joined with God in plotting resurrection for a world that so often lies in the grasp of death.

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Arlington, Va.

••••••••••••••••••••••••

Resurrection is the climax of the Holy One's scheme to overthrow the great enemy we call by various names: hell, death, the grave.

••••••••••••••••••••••••

The Passion

John Rempel

A newspaper clipping from the year I lived in the Philippines fell out of a file folder the other day. It was a picture of the daughter of a murdered farmer—his name was Teodoro Ejaco—sitting weeping beside her dead father. The scene is too intimate, the grief too private to be photographed. The military insisted that Teodoro was a communist rebel and the rebels insisted that he was an innocent civilian. Whoever he was, Teodoro Ejaco was caught in a spiral of injustice and violence not of his making.

I felt pity, even sorrow, for him. As I look at the picture of him it merges with one of Jesus, limp and pathetic, after he is taken down from the cross. As I look at Jesus, I find consolation in that most mystifying of Christian claims: God was crucified. Because God took on himself all the glory and shame of being human, this Filipino farmer's death did not happen without divine notice or sorrow. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are" (Hebrews 4:15 NRSV). The One we worship is "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3 RSV).

As I think of Jesus, disfigured and dirty, I cannot keep my picture of him separate from that of Teodoro. Like Jesus he was despised and rejected. Jesus died for Teodoro. For him and for all whose lives end senselessly, Jesus' sacrifice is the final barrier against despair. The God of heaven and earth not only became human, he took upon himself the darkest reach of human experience: the senselessness of undeserved death. That is why we preach a crucified Christ; that is why Good Friday is the day of days.

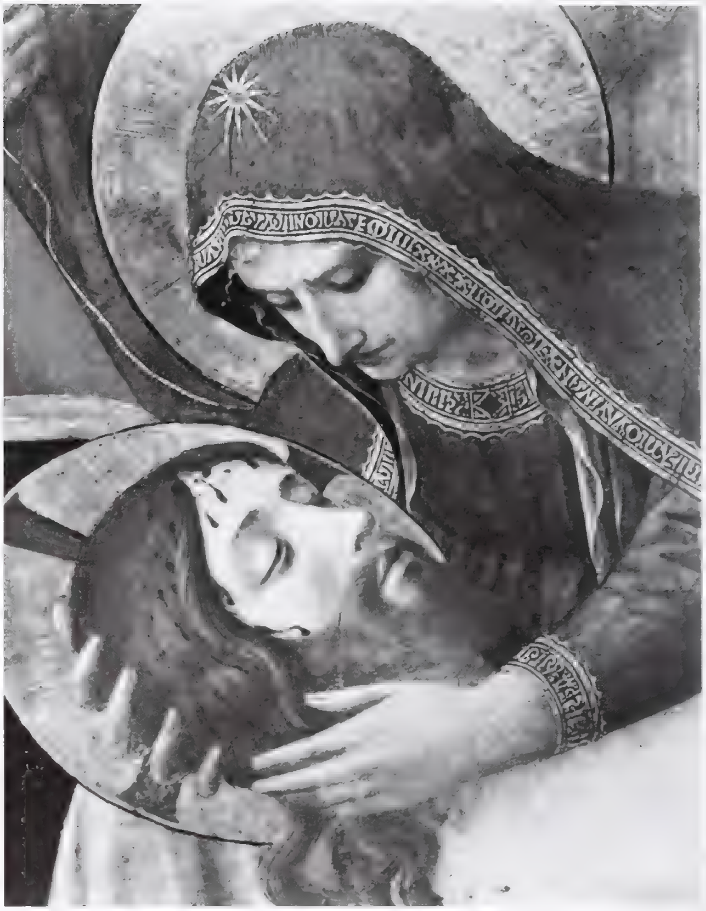
Jesus' Passion is the heart of the gospel. In three stunning days everything he stood for came true. Jesus blurts out the meaning of his life in one tortured line of prayer: "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42 NRSV).

We cannot understand Christ's suffering from a distance. Its meaning is revealed to us only when we place ourselves in his presence, when we join him in his anguish. This happens in many ways. Two of them stand out during Lent. We join him in his anguish when we see Christ in the Teodoros of the world and engage ourselves on their behalf. We also join him when we re-enter the story of his last supper, his desertion by friends, his torture and abandonment to die. Then we are ready to participate in the greatest wonder, his eruption from death and the tomb, his conquest of fate and despair.

On Maundy Thursday we kneel before one another in servanthood as our Master once did. On Good Friday we proclaim his death with bread and wine. On Easter we meet him in our midst, disbelieving for joy.

The time before Easter is an invitation to stake our lives on this Suffering Servant.

John Rempel is pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship.



"Resurrection" by Master of the Life of Mary (Cologne, 1463-90), photo by RNS

The crucified

Fern Pankratz Ruth

As you stood by him, Mary,
Sharing the shame
There at the sign of the skull,
With the clamoring crowd
Bombarding your ears,
And the hammering thuds
Keeping pulse with the throb of your heart,
When he took on himself
Sins of the world,
Did you take on yourself
Guilt for his woe?
Did you question the skill
Of your nurturing love,
Blaming yourself and asking
Where had you done wrong,
What could you have done
Differently?

Fern Pankratz Ruth is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Letters

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

The recent (Feb. 2-4) Mennonite Arts Weekend (see article on page 17) sponsored by the Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship reminds us that the church's stewardship of the arts is of great importance. A significant part of that stewardship is the care and support of the artists among us—musicians, actors, painters, writers, dancers and their counterparts.

At Normal '89 the Association of Mennonites in the Arts was founded. One of the fine outcomes of that beginning has been a list of 400 artists who have identified themselves with the association. As its director I hold that list and have made it available for those planning arts programs and projects. I had good intentions to communicate frequently with members, but my implementation was poor. Because being a pastor (at Beaverdam Mennonite Church) takes my full-time attention, I am especially pleased to make the following announcement.

The Association of Mennonites in the Arts is embarking on a new phase. Plans are under way to publish a newsletter, and I am pleased to say that Cynthia Yoder of New York City is the editor. Cynthia brings enthusiasm and excellent qualifications to this exciting task and is eager to let you know about the publication.

There will be a subscription cost for the newsletter. The situation that the association runs on a shoestring has not changed, and every small contribution is greatly appreciated. For information about the newsletter, please send me your name and address. Those who already are members of the Association should write only if your address has changed during the last four years. My home address is 17716 Route 89, Corry, PA 16407. *Philip K. Clemens, Corry, Pa.*

TRUE TO REALITY

I want to say thank you to Mathew Swora for publicly declaring those two humbling words—I failed (Nov. 28, 1995 issue, page 3).

I also failed to bring a group of sincere Christians, several of whom I baptized, to a place of being in mission as a church. After 10 years of growing together we decided to merge with the parent church that had called me to begin a new congregation in Oita city (Japan) in the first place. The process of merging was not easy, and criticisms landed heavy blows to my spirit.

That was only the beginning of the longer process of finding my true identity. During the past couple of years I have come to realize that a sense of failure can be one step toward mental illness.

Jan Eitzen's article (Dec. 26, 1995, issue, page 3) is a poignant testimony to the fact that mental illness is not far from any of us. I have always been afraid of failure and therefore have often portrayed an image of being in control. But now I want to be true to reality, which for me means accepting the need for professional care and accepting myself as I am. After a year of counseling I understand that God has created us with an inner pool of strength with which to face fears and put our energy into the work and life before us. Knowing that I can accept failure and criticism has freed my spirit, and I feel ready to serve people again in the role God has prepared for me. I am also ready to hear the laughter Jan enjoyed while being a patient on the mental ward. Please share with us the sequel to her story. *Bill Derksen, Oita, Japan*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

For one week 63 artists and musicians from 12 nations in Central and Eastern Europe wrestled with issues pertaining to art and faith, built relationships across many borders, and renewed their relationships with Christ. Participants from different traditions of Christian faith ranging from Orthodox to Pentecostal attended the Budapest Artists' Gathering.

Sessions included panel discussions on topics like "What Does the Great Commission Mean to the Artist?" "Moral Integrity of the Artist" and "Relating to the Local Church." The visual artists and musicians met separately for viewing slides and works submitted by the artists and for sharing ideas.

The worship times took on a heightened meaning because of the contributions from the classical music performers. Highlights for me were the playing of pianist Sergei Forostyani of St. Petersburg, Russia, and the music played by a young trio from Bulgaria of soprano, cello and piano. Through these performers it seemed one could receive a glimpse of the perfection of God.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of such an event is the sharing that takes place on an informal basis.

We heard accounts of continued suffering in Bulgaria and Croatia. In Sofia, Bulgaria, the musicians reported their difficulty of persecution from the Orthodox Church, which was difficult to raise as there were many Orthodox believers [at the gathering]. We prayed with our brothers and sisters from Croatia who have witnessed and experienced much suffering. *Timothy Bentch, Commission on Overseas Mission Associate, Budapest, Hungary*

Copies of the children's Bibles we published arrived on Jan. 16. They were only in customs about 10 days. Orders have shattered our expectations. The Bibles have opened doors closed to us before. People are asking us to sell to them when they wouldn't carry our products before. We've been able to sell books to Carrefour (a large French supermarket chain like Walmart). A store in Campinas took 100 Bibles and almost all our recent books.

We thought our sales were good last year—we almost doubled our goal of $24,000 U.S. with annual sales of about $45,000. This month we'll have $40,000-50,000, and 95 percent of that has been in the last 10 days. We've hired our first employee, a salesperson. In February we plan to hire a half-time person for our stock. I've ordered another 10,000 Bibles to arrive in March.

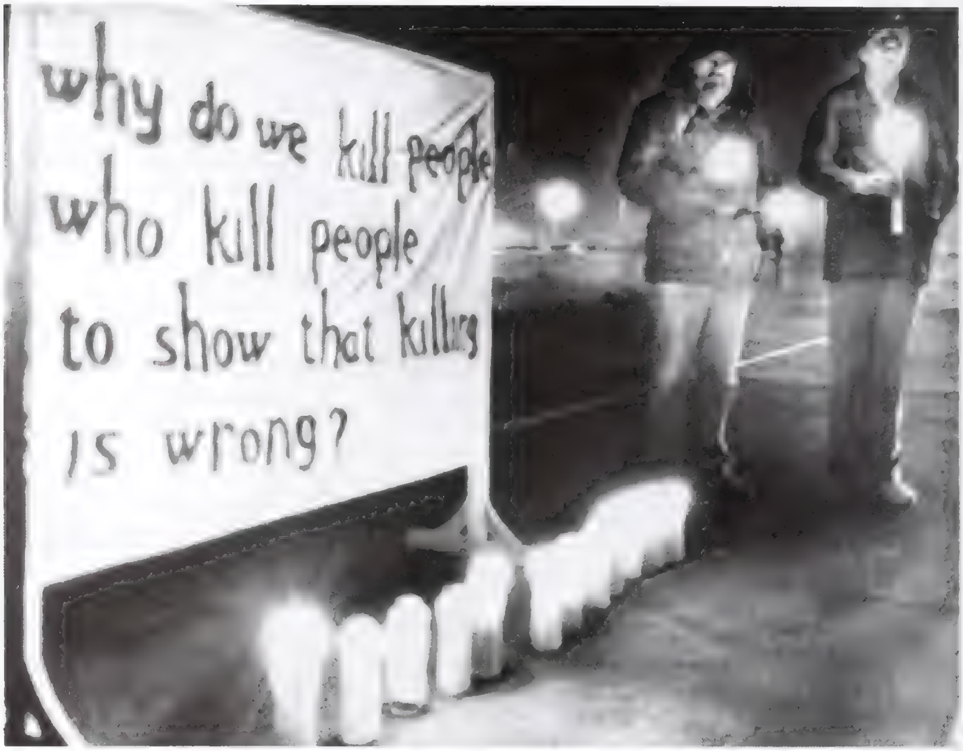
Pat's life is just as busy as mine. She started teaching on Monday. They say she inherited the class from hell. I guess a missionary is the right person for the job. *David Falk, Commission on Overseas Mission worker, Campinas, Brazil*

You can bring light to death row

An invitation to get to know prisoners who have few friends

Michael B. Ross

> *I wish we could challenge church people to take it upon themselves to get the names of some death row inmates and write to them. It's important to come in contact with them and know them as people, not as criminals awaiting execution. They ought to take it upon themselves to find out about these people that society has condemned to die.*
>
> —mother of Mike Berryhill, a death row inmate



RNS

A variety of actions: *Some protest capital punishment; others write to death row inmates.*

Death Row can be a dark and lonely place. As a condemned person, you have been told by society that you are not worthy of even life itself. You are automatically deemed too dangerous to be placed with the general prison population and are isolated from all the other prisoners by being housed in a separate, special unit called death row. This isolation goes even further, for many condemned men and women eventually lose contact with and/or are abandoned by their own families.

How do I know this? I'm a condemned man myself, on Connecticut's death row. But I'm one of the lucky ones. I still have contact with some of my family, and I have several pen pals—including one in Canada and two in Ireland. However, I'm the exception, not the rule.

I know of inmates who receive no letters and have no visits. I know of many other condemned men in other states who are in the same situation. I even know of people who were executed and had no one to claim their bodies. They were buried in a state pauper's grave with no one at the services but the prison's chaplain—if they were lucky enough to have services at all—and with the final indignity of having a prison number on the grave marker instead of a name. They were just faceless convicts executed by the state and buried in nameless graves, with no one to even notice their passing, never mind mourn their deaths.

Yes, death row can be a lonely place. But you have the power to change that. You have the ability to bring a ray of light and hope to the dismal darkness of death row isolation. And at the same time that ray of light may touch your heart and teach you things you never imagined.

It's as easy as writing a letter. In prison, letters can be that ray of light and hope to someone who may otherwise be completely alone. That's why the Death Row Support Project, a pen-pal service administered by the Church of the Brethren for death row inmates, was started.

The experience of writing often has a profound effect on the individuals involved—on both sides of the correspondence. Those on death row know that someone is concerned about them, and they are better able to deal with the difficulties of life on death row. Those on death row who feel connected to support on the outside are less likely to waive their appeals and volunteer for execution.

Those on the outside learn that to know just one prisoner can dispel some of the misconceptions and fears about prisons and those locked away there. Many have been moved to a variety of actions, such as writing articles for newspapers and newsletters, becoming actively involved with local anti-capital punishment groups, and encouraging others to begin writing to other death row inmates.

Jesus' call for us to visit those in prison is clear. Correspondence may be your way of visiting. How can you get involved? For the name and address of a condemned person, contact Rachel Gross, Coordinator, The Death Row Support Project, P.O. Box 600, Liberty Mills, IN 46946, (219) 982-7480. Tell her Michael Ross sent you.

As a condemned man myself, I thank you. But once you get involved with the Death Row Support Project, I believe you will thank yourself.

Michael Ross is in prison in Somers, Conn.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

God wants justice, mercy and humility

The early Anabaptists carried on the biblical tradition from Micah, Jesus and Paul.

Mitchell Brown

In Micah 6:1-8 we find the essence of the prophetic tradition. Here is a real turning point in human religious development. What does God want? For the first time in history we learn what he does not want. God does not care a whit for burnt offerings, for sumptuous year-old calves. The sacrificial system that had powered the religious economy is now over. What then does God really want? Justice, mercy and a humble walk with God.

Justice: Doing good to others, caring for the poor.

Mercy: The Hebrew word "hesed" not only means mercy but the active love of others (not just doing good to others but loving them deeply). "Hesed" also means the type of love that God shows to humanity through his covenant.

Humility: The culmination of the first two: coming to God not with sacrifice but by walking humbly with the Lord. This is us here in church; it is Felix Manz and Conrad Grebel—the first Anabaptists—in a house in January 1521.

Justice is out there in the world; love is deep in our hearts. Humility is that relationship with God that completes these two. We are called to love God in a trinitarian pattern through our minds, our hearts, our souls. This is our Anabaptist faith.

Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-12) pushes us a little further beyond this classic definition of faith found in Micah. Let's put ourselves on that mountainside, waiting to hear Jesus, but let's try to hear him without 2,000 years of tradition, to hear him like those first hearers. What does this new preacher say? Will he call us to arms against the Roman oppressor? After all, some have called him Messiah, and that's what messiah is supposed to do. Will he work wonders? Will he magically transform us? Make us rich? Many thoughts are gathered at the foot of that mountain. What does Jesus say?

"Blessed are the poor in spirit. … Blessed are the meek. … Blessed are the merciful."

What we hear is tradition. He does not break with the past. He calls us back, radically back to the words of Micah: humility, mercy, peace, purity of heart. This is a radical revolution, but it goes back to the basics. We, too, must go back. This is what Felix Manz and Conrad Grebel felt on that day 475 years ago. They were accused of being radical innovators, just as Jesus was before them.

Simplicity: What were they saying? Go back to the basic, simple relationship with God. It is the message of simplicity. Think of the ornate Catholic churches of Grebel's day. Grebel and Manz worshiped in a house. Look at the ornate temple of Jesus' day and its thriving economy of sacrifice. What does Jesus do? He turns over the tables and goes to preach on a mountainside. What is required by God? Simplicity itself: justice, mercy and humility in the plainest of settings.

Paul, good theologian that he was, pushed the discussion up a notch. To see the central importance of Paul, think of the mind, heart and soul. Micah speaks to our minds, tells us what to do. Jesus transforms our hearts; we move from talking to doing. And Paul addresses our souls.

Wisdom had traditionally been the food of the soul. But what happened to wisdom? Human wisdom replaced divine wisdom. Human wisdom gives us sacrifice and temples and, if we are not careful, religion.

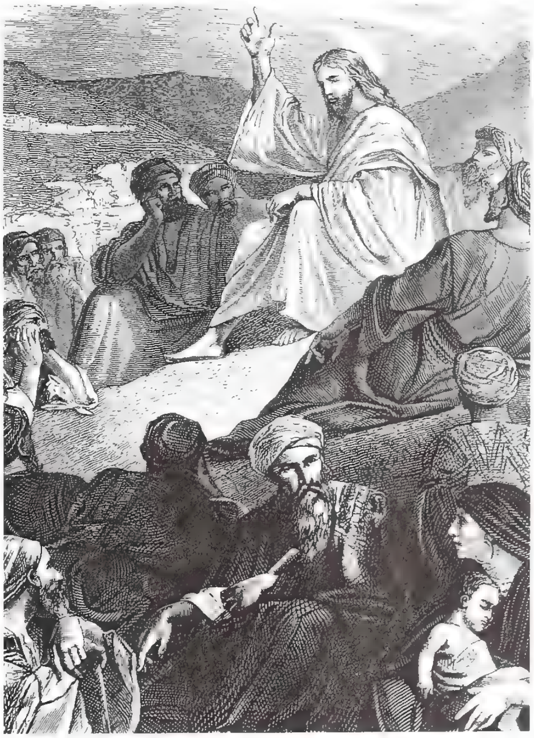
What does Paul say? He quotes Scripture: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart" (1 Corinthians 1:19).

How does God do this? The cross. The world is transformed. Jesus spoke to our hearts. But Jesus did not have the cross. Even he didn't know of his fate. He lived like us, not knowing when death would take him. A life cannot be fully appreciated until it is over. Our deaths round out the stories of our lives, and it is left to others to tell the meanings of our lives. It is left to Paul to complete the story of Jesus, to take us from the life and teaching of Jesus to its final meaning. And that cannot be understood but only symbolized. We can only look at the cross. That is our wisdom; that is where we find our souls.

Our faith is a trinitarian faith. It is a faith in the Father, a faith in the world out there, a faith that we read about in Micah today. It is a faith in Jesus the Son, a heart-transforming faith that we see so well expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. And finally it is a faith in the soul-transforming power of the Holy Spirit, a faith given expression for all time in the writings of Paul.

Mitchell Brown is pastor at Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

What is required by God? Simplicity itself: justice, mercy and humility in the plainest of settings.



RNS

Lessons from Mennonites in Colombia

Missionaries see despair in North American churches.

Carla Reimer

Jack and Irene Suderman of Winnipeg have added more than 40,000 miles on their Honda over the last 18 months, telling North American Mennonites about their experiences in Colombia. The Sudermans served for five years with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The couple, who returned from Colombia in June 1994, have been impressed by people's genuine interest in overseas missions. They have given 275 presentations in 53 churches and 17 church-related institutions in Canada and the United States. Some congregations want follow-up visits.

The kind of dialogue that occurs as a result of intineration is essential, says Jack. "We are a part of the international body of Christ. It is important for one part of the family to know what the other part is doing," he says.

They have been surprised at how often church members have expressed feelings of despair and hopelessness. "People seem to be searching even though everything is so organized in the churches," says Irene. "One person commented, 'We tend to be program-oriented, while the Colombian Mennonites are people-oriented.'"

Another individual said, "We no longer know what it means to be the church." Someone else responded, "The problem is that we don't know what it means to be a Christian."

"There has been an obvious shift in the churches to an inward focus. A large percent of the time, money and energy is being spent on taking care of the members," says Jack.

This is partially due to the fact that issues related to abuse and the break-up of families are receiving more attention than they have in the past, he says.

While these issues need to be addressed, Jack says, the North American Mennonite churches should strive for a balance between their inward and outward ministries.

"I think many people are overwhelmed by this inward agenda. They are feeling like they have lost something," he says. "Hearing the stories from the Colombian Mennonite Church helped people put their finger on what it is that is missing."

Colombian Mennonites are expected to be involved in the life of the church from the moment they are baptized. "The needs are so great that participation is essential," says Irene.

"Stories from the Colombian Church helped people put their finger on what it is that is missing": *Irene and Jack Suderman*

Living with fear and uncertainty

Jack and Irene Suderman came face to face with their own mortality while they served in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission.

They lived in an area of Santafe de Bogota where a war was being fought between druglord Pablo Escobar and the Colombian government. (Escobar was killed by the Colombian military in December 1993). Over a period of time, 15 bombs exploded within a four-block radius of their apartment. The Sudermans were not harmed, but many other residents were killed as a result of the bombs.

Until then, the couple, who now reside in Winnipeg, hadn't been exposed to the level of violence that is part of life in Colombia.

"I was a good North American in that I pretended I was immortal. Death was something that happened to other people," says Jack. "As a result of the bombs, I came face to face with the fact that I could die. That was really tough."

"We faced uncertainty each time we left the house," says Irene. "As a result, we prayed to God with a sense of urgency. Each morning we thanked God for a new day. God became much more real to me."

Their relationships with other Christians also deepened. "It was a privilege to walk alongside people who have gone through a lot pain. We learned to depend on each other, allowing us to carry the load together," says Irene.

"It was liberating for me to understand what Colombians face at a young age," says Jack. "I learned that death is not the ultimate enemy. I think the early Anabaptists understood that; I think Colombian Mennonites understand that, and maybe Escobar's bombs helped me understand that better as well." *Carla Reimer*

◆

DONATVS
SIMENS

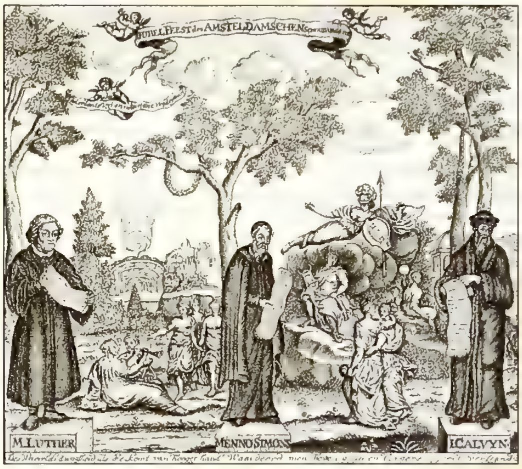
◆ MENNO SIMONS ◆

Places, Portraits and Progeny

◆

An insert in the Mennonite Reporter, Mennonite Weekly Review, and The Mennonite.

Who doesn't know Luther as the man who would drastically change the religious landscape of Europe by nailing his theses to a door? Who doesn't know Calvin as the man who would call many peoples–and especially the Dutch–to be sober, thrifty, and God-fearing citizens? But who really knows Menno Simons, the thoughtful ex-priest from Friesland who, quieter than all the others, would lay claim to the title Reformer of the Netherlands?



Protestants Preaching Against Worldly Folly
Caricature of Protestant moralizing and church divisions, personified by Luther, Menno and Calvin, to commemorate 25 years of the Amsterdam Theater in 1738. Engraving, attributed to A. Allard (Print collection, Universiteits Bibliotheek, Amsterdam)

January 31, 1996 marks approximately 500 years since Menno Simons was born in the Frisian town of Witmarsum. After leaving the Catholic church, Menno, through rebaptism, joined a young movement that bore the hate of the world on its shoulders. From 1534 to 1535, extremist Anabaptists used force to proclaim the New Jerusalem on earth in the German city of Münster, as well as in Amsterdam, Friesland and Groningen in the Low Countries. In 1536, armed only with Scripture, Menno Simons had the courage to turn the remnants of the radical movement toward pacifism.

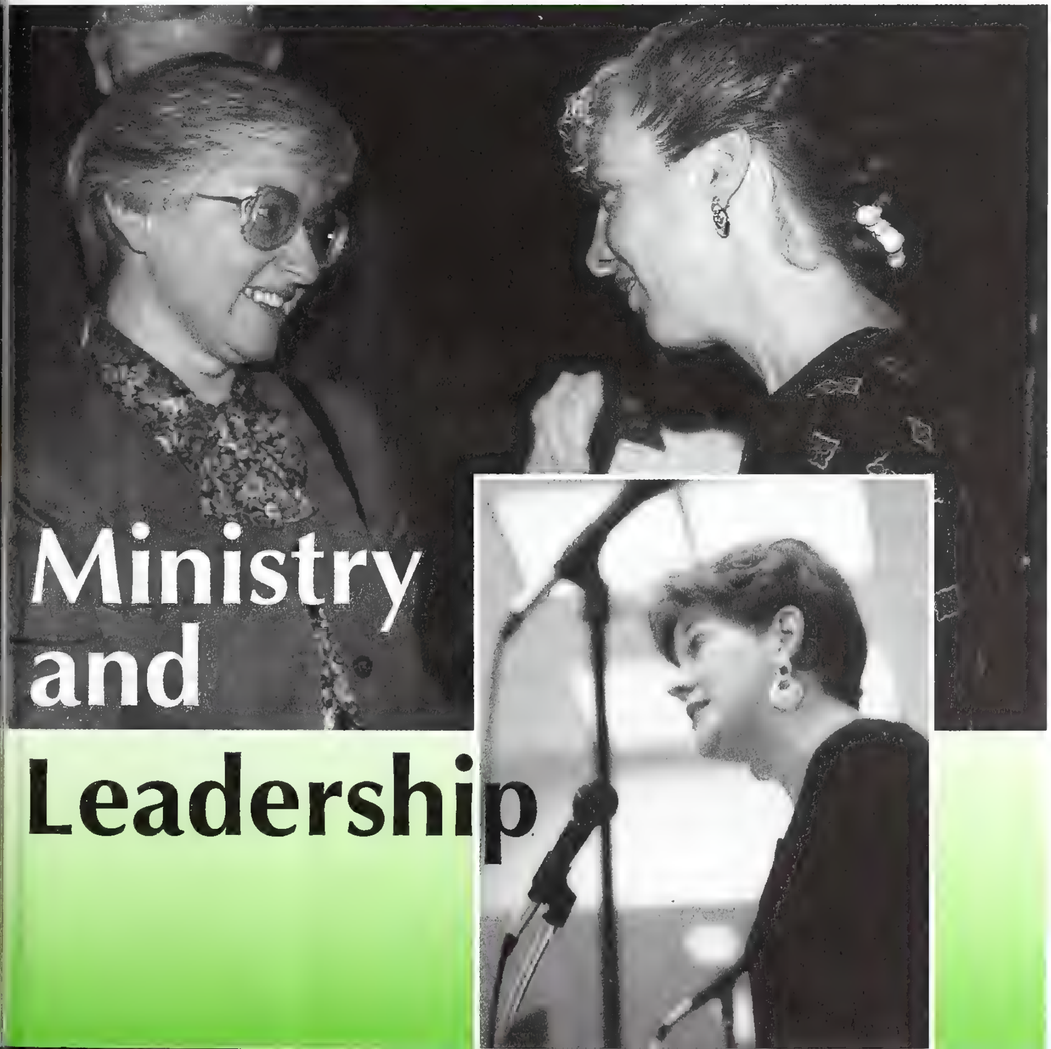
Hated by Church and Crown, he and his followers, called *Mennisten* or Mennonites, withdrew from the world to lead sober, pious and industrious lives. *In the world, but not of the world* became their motto. These *Stillen im Lande*, however, would not be able to live in peace for many years. Condemned as heretics and heirs to the Münsterite legacy, more than 3000 Anabaptists were executed for their faith. The authorities also put a price on Menno's head. As a fugitive from the law, Menno continued to preach and patiently defend his peace-loving principles until his death in 1561 as a refugee in North Germany.

WM

THE Mennonite

March 26, 1996

WINDOW TO MISSION



Ministry and Leadership

. As
d in
the
and
tch
try.

viss
to
day
ner-
one
ion

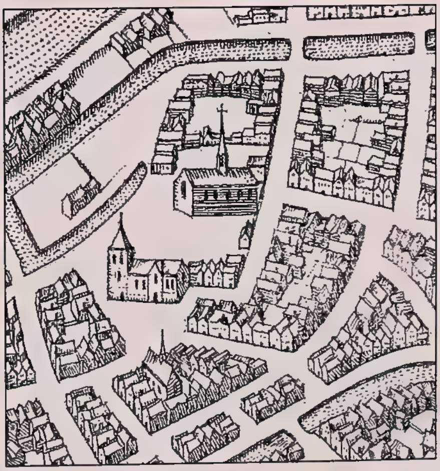
ne-
nce
l, is
as a
gin.
me
us-

This handsome volume, accessible to a wide audience but based on sound scholarly research, is organized in the form of a tryptic, which moves symbolically from black and white in the first section of the book to full color by the third.

1. In the Footsteps of Menno

"The White House" near Witmarsum, Friesland. According to folk tradition, Menno lived and preached here, although there is no way to substantiate this claim.

The first section traces the life and career of Menno Simons through historical maps, cityscapes and other sixteenth-century prints – a visual chronicle that follows Menno's sojourn through the Low Countries and the North German coastal areas, from Witmarsum, via the Rhineland and the Baltic regions to Bad Oldesloe. Modern black and white photographs show what is left today of the historical sites. This section thus is also useful as a modern travel guide through the villages and cities that marked Menno's life.

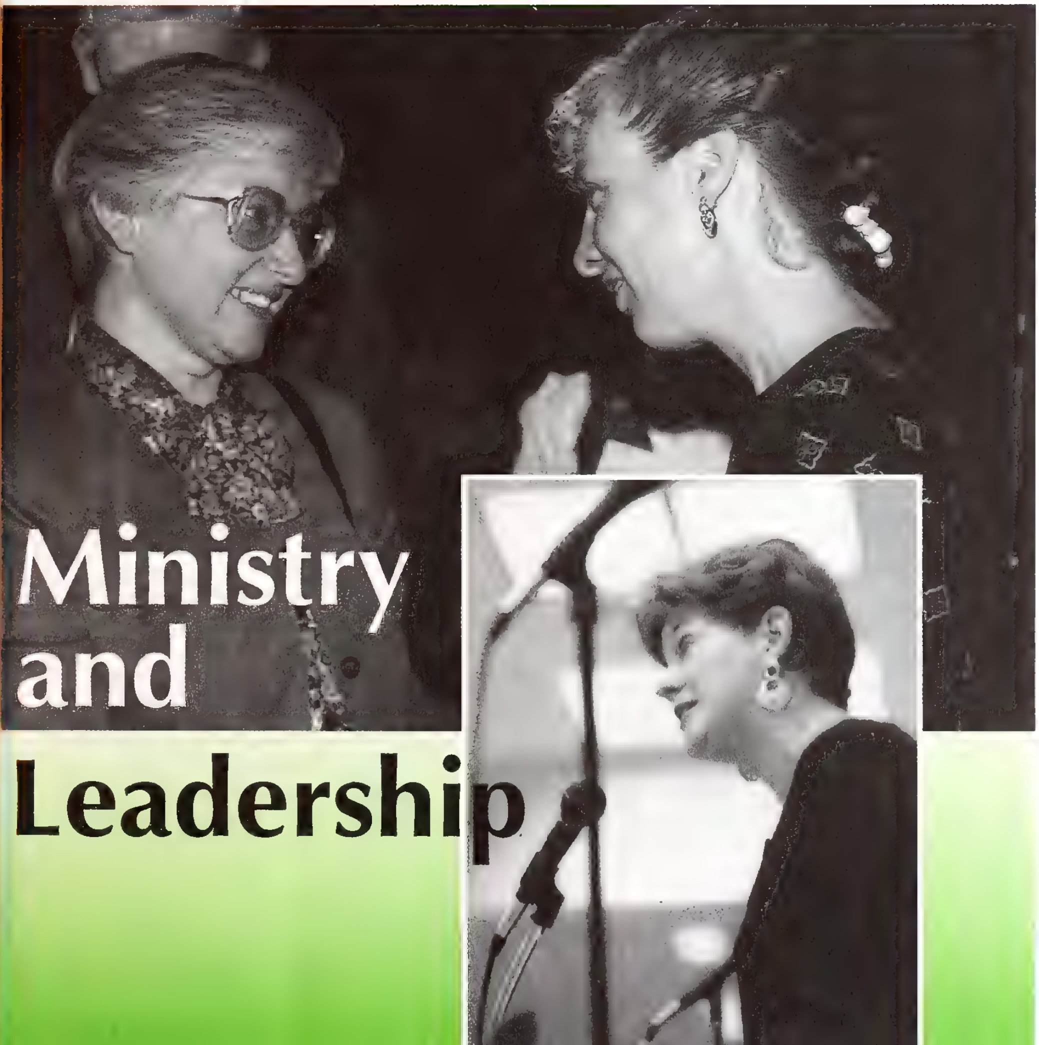


Leeuwarden, Friesland, with the Jacobijnekerk and Dominican cloister that played important roles in fighting against heretics like Menno. Detail from a map by Ortelius (1580) (Universiteits Bibliotheek, Amsterdam)

THE
Mennonite

March 26, 1996

WINDOW TO MISSION

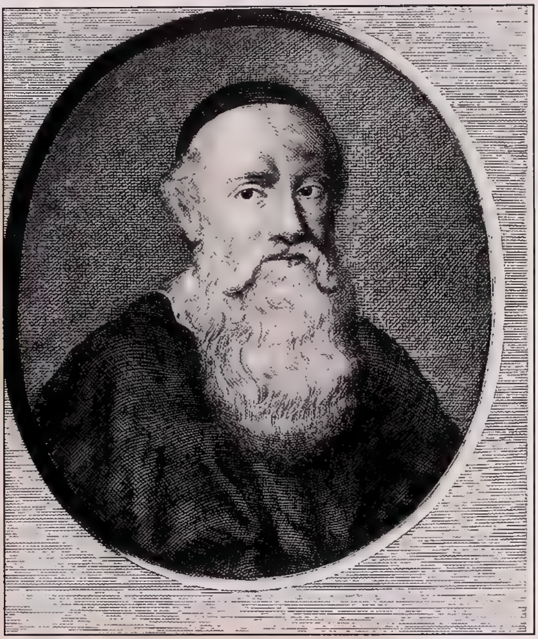

Ministry and Leadership

. As
l in
the
and
tch
try.

viss
to
day
ner-
one
ion

ne-
nce
l, is
s a
gin.
me
us-

2. The Many Faces of Menno



Menno Simons
Engraving by Reinier Vinkeles
after drawing by Jacobus Buys (1792)
(Doopsgezinde Bibliotheek,
UB-Amsterdam)

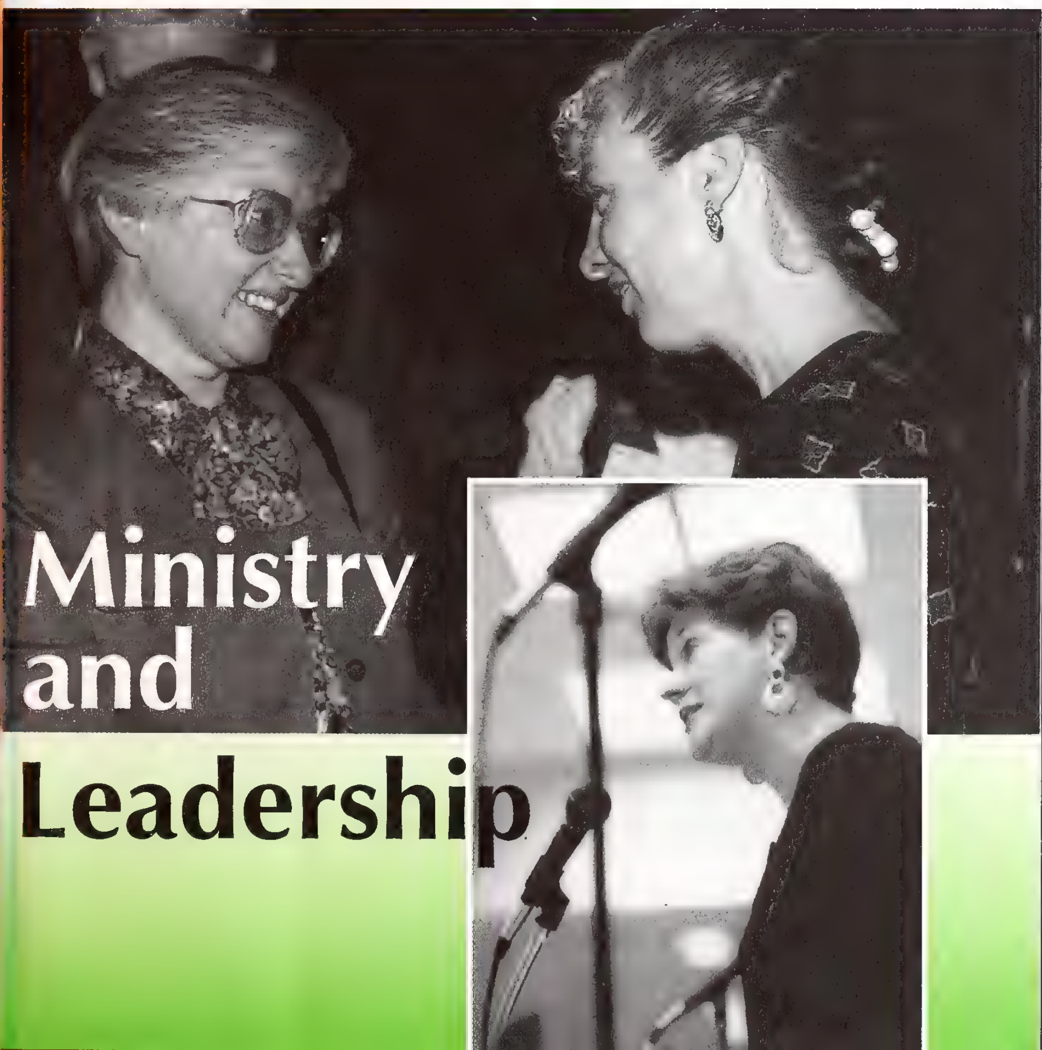
The second section, a so-called iconography, describes all of the known portraits of Menno. Never has there been such a complete overview of the more than 80 different portrayals of Menno's face rendered between 1607 and 1995. These range from caricatures and cartoons to heroic portraits and romanticized interpretations. Despite all of the efforts to capture the essence of Menno in picture, there is not one actual likeness of the revered Anabaptist leader. The oldest portrait of Menno, possibly intended as a caricature, was not produced until almost 50 years after his death.

WM

THE
Mennonite

March 26, 1996

WINDOW TO MISSION



Ministry and Leadership

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 1 Peter 4:10

CONTENTS

3 **Spring**
by Esther C. Bergen

4 **Dream becomes reality**
by Mary Dyck

6 **Another answer to an age-old question**
by Lydia Harder

8 **WM scholarship recipients**
by Ruth Ann Gardner

9 **Journey thoughts**
by Bek Linsenmeyer

10 **What does God want?**
by Ingrid Schultz

11 **Jubilee: a gift of ministry**
by Sandi Hannigan

12 **I stand amazed: Mexico City ministry**
by Jeannie Zehr

13 **Meet Women's World Outreach Fund recipient Meg Rouse**
by Bek Linsenmeyer

14 **Roundtable**
by guest columnist Jeanette Hanson

15 **Facts and figures**
by Susan Jantzen

16 **Window shopping**

Cover photos credits: Mary E. Klassen, AMBS; Vada Snider

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Spring

by Esther C. Bergen

I've packed away my winter clothes,
The black, the brown, the gray;
I've shed my dreary world of woes,
Because it's spring today.

The quick'ning pulse of nature throbs
In every branch and blade.
The sun's bright rays with fairy wands
Touch every nook and glade.

"Awake, Awake," the breezes chant,
"Shake off old winter's gloom,
Let newness in your heart be born,
After your lifeless tomb."

As nature heeds the call of spring,
And dons its new array,
So may my soul relive again
Its Resurrection Day.

Esther C. Bergen is from Winnipeg and is a member of Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Dream becomes reality

by Mary Dyck

When I reflect on how God prepared and called me to the ministry I am invariably reminded of my parents. I grew up in western Manitoba, the oldest of five children. My parents spoke little about their faith, but they lived it. They were sensitive to the needs of people around them and responded with love and practical help. Having grown up with this philosophy it seemed natural to respond to peoples' needs as I became aware of them. As servants of Christ we are called to represent Christ and the church in the congregation and in the world. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25 invites and challenges us to use our God-given gifts and talents.

For many years I felt content serving Christ and the church through my women's group. I remember exchanging sewing projects and offering to visit shut-ins, seniors and people who were ill. Through my parents' struggle with illness and death, and later when my own children were critically ill for lengthy periods of time, I became aware of the true value of a good friend who could listen to my pain and be supportive. As I was called to serve as a deacon in the church, I came to recognize my gift and the joy and fulfillment that came as I reached out to people in their pain. I was responding to need, but I yearned to learn how to be more effective as I visited people who were ill physically, emotionally and spiritually.

I sought the advice of friends and peers and was encouraged to take courses in counseling, church ministry and clinical pastoral education. These were life-transforming experiences. I learned how to express Christ's love unconditionally to those in the church and in hospital ministry where I encountered many who were estranged from the church.

As a woman entering the ministry there were many hurdles to overcome. Traditionally in the Mennonite church women's opportunities for ministry did not focus on preaching and pastoral ministry. Yet I had experienced a very clear call to serve in the capacity of hospital ministry and felt affirmed and fulfilled as I met with people in crisis and pain.

The support and encouragement of several Christian sisters who were willing to meet, listen and help discern were invaluable in my journey toward ordination and full-time ministry. The expressions of support, both verbal and with encouraging notes, were very helpful.

When my husband became ill I had already been serving as a hospital chaplain in Winnipeg for several years. Knowing the help that social agencies offered was invaluable as we struggled with his disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). During his illness and after his death I went through what I later called my "Moses in the desert" experience. During this desert time God again spoke in a quiet voice, encouraging me to continue my studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. My husband and I had talked about this possibility and he had affirmed and encouraged this undertaking.

It was also at this time that I experienced the wonderful support of Women in Mission. WM's financial support helped make this dream and desire become reality. However, it accomplished much more than that for it was an expression of support to me as a ministering person. I experienced this as an affirmation of my gifts in ministry.

Our new Confession of Faith states that "we believe that ministry continues the work of Christ who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world." In my case this involved moving away from home, family and friends to become a chaplain at Schowalter Villa in Hesston, Kan. However, I am finding that it is a gratifying experience to follow in obedience. I am rewarded as I seek to be the outstretched hand of Christ to those who are struggling with various losses.

To be greeted by a friendly "I'm glad you're here" by Marjie, who is blind and has learned to recognize people by their footsteps, is a reward in itself. Later as I greet the residents coming to chapel for the midweek service—some walking, some with the aid of walkers or canes, still others coming in wheelchairs—seeing the anticipation on their faces is indeed an encouragement. It is not uncommon to hear a resident share that she or he is the last of several siblings, some have children living far away, some do not have any family. They have said goodbye to so many relatives and friends. Besides the loss of loved ones they are also seeking to cope with the loss of independence, home and now loss of health. Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it unto me." I wake up each morning with purpose: to minister to the needs of those in my care. The blessing far outweighs the cost.

Mary Dyck, formerly from Winnipeg, now serves as chaplain at Schowalter Villa in Hesston, Kan., and attends Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan. In 1993 and 1994 Mary was a WM scholarship recipient.

Another answer to an age-old question

by Lydia Harder

When I was a little girl I sometimes found it difficult to say what I wanted to be when I grew up. My standard answer was "a teacher." There was another answer that I never dared whisper even to myself. It seemed too presumptuous for me to confess to hearing a still small voice calling me to pastoral ministry. Instead I followed a path acceptable to parents, community and church, becoming an elementary school teacher and volunteering my services in the Sunday school.

I enjoyed many aspects of my work but also discovered new facets of my personality. It was good to realize that I was creative, but knowing how angry I could get and how insensitive I could be to individual children gave me a deep hunger for a God who could direct me in the daily struggles of life.

After two years of teaching, I studied theology for three years at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg, which my parents encouraged for all their children. Those were some of my richest years (not only because I met my husband, Gary). It felt like a luxury to read and study and reflect in the midst of a community that treasured both worship and scholarly thought. But it was also during this time that my disillusionment with the local church reached its height. CMBC became a safe place for me to ask questions about the reality of God when my naive belief in the Bible and the church were devastated because of some hurtful experiences for our family in the home church.

At first the analytical academic thinking at CMBC added to this disillusionment, raising more questions than it answered. However, as I continued to study and reflect on both the Bible and my experience, I came to see God's grace and love in a deeper way. I came to believe that God had chosen to communicate to us, not outside human mediation, but used humans to write the Bible and humans to be the church. The possibility that God could also use me became a promise that brought meaning and purpose to my life.

My life's work took a different turn when I married and became a homemaker. The communities in which I did theology were now primarily groups of women in weekly Bible study or adult Sunday school classes in the church Gary was pastoring. The ultimate issues during these years were the raising of children, the growing of a marriage and the questions raised by accidental death, suicide, domestic violence and interpersonal conflict. The answers that we found together gave direction but also raised new issues. During this time I continued to ask myself the same question, which always seemed to relate to the future: "What do I really want to be when I finally grow up?"

The opportunity to teach at seminary level in Paraguay during Gary's sabbatical was a significant turning point for me. The experience of teaching English and Christian education to adults confirmed what I had only admitted secretly. I felt the most fulfillment and excitement when I interacted with other adults about life questions, particularly in the context of Bible study. I wondered how that all fit with my earlier sense of calling to ministry.

Back in Canada I reconsidered my plans to return to school, finding that few credits would transfer for an education degree. With encouragement from Gary, I decided, finally, to study theology. Unexpectedly, I received extra credit for past studies and experience and so entered directly into an advanced degree program at Newman College—a not-so-small miracle!

The ecumenical interaction at this Catholic college brought new questions but also showed me that God works in many different ways. Occasional teaching opportunities in various colleges following several years of part-time studies were exciting. Our family was settled and comfortable in the community we had lived in for 15 years.

Many people wondered about the wisdom of our next decision. Why would a homemaker facing 50 move her family across the country to begin a six-year doctoral program in theology? We needed much support from the congregation as we left our secure environment to move to Toronto. Gary's commitment to mutuality and his willingness to move for the sake of my studies created this new possibility for me. However, to take this step I had to overcome a lifetime of conditioning that told me that for women, housework and practical service always take precedence over scholarly work. The affirmation of several friends was crucial at this time. Even though they would have made different choices themselves, they affirmed my sense of call.

Wrestling with practical issues at home, in church and community while reflecting theologically about these issues was right for me. My faith in God was frequently tested when deadlines for papers loomed before me or the thesis topic just would not come together. However, my conviction that listening to God involves openness to the revealing and saving presence of God in both Bible and present experience has been strengthened.

Do I now know what I will be when I grow up? I continue to find the question relevant as I begin a new occupation but also begin to think about retirement. Perhaps the call to ministry that I have felt throughout my life was always a call to further growth and maturity. Perhaps ministry is really an invitation to be a disciple, following God who leads us step by step in the specific situation in which we are placed.

Lydia Harder is interim director of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and also teaches courses in Anabaptist theology and biblical interpretation. She is a member of the preaching team at Toronto United Mennonite Church. Lydia and Gary have three children and one grandchild.

Vicki Biggerstaff (left) and Tonya Ramer are 1995-96 recipients of scholarships from Women in Mission.

Meet WM's 1995-96 scholarship recipients

by Ruth Ann Gardner

Vickie Biggerstaff comes from the Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church in Sioux Falls, S.D. She has been a librarian at a Baptist seminary for 15 years and began study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) this September. She has been active as a congregational leader, as her church's Living in Faithful Evangelism coordinator, as a volunteer with local refugees, in the local Self-Help store and with international students. She is pursuing a master's in Peace Studies and is open to whatever the future holds. She thanks Women in Mission for "their generosity and continuing interest in helping women seminarians."

Tonya Ramer is a 1994 graduate of Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., with degrees in Bible and religion, and Music. During the summer of 1992 she was an intern with the Ministry Inquiry Program at her home church, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio. She is working toward the master of divinity degree and continues to discern where God will send her. An accomplished organist, Tonya frequently contributes to worship events in the Sermon on the Mount Chapel at AMBS.

Journey thoughts

A new direction

by Bek Linsenmeyer

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received (1 Peter 4:10).

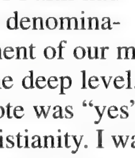
Confession
of
Faith
in a Mennonite Perspective

This issue of *Window* brings to reality a dream that began after Wichita '95. I heard that a delegate came to Wichita resistant to integration, but by the time of the integration vote had turned around 180 degrees. Hearing the discussion and participating in the vote on the Confession of Faith had called him to self-examination. If the two denominations could own this Confession, a statement of our most deeply held beliefs, he reasoned, then we are already one at some deep level. Any practical differences can and must be overcome. And so his vote was "yes" for integration.

I was moved at this account of real Christianity. I was also stricken to hear that for some the Confession is now past history. Yes, this document will be a part of our history, but it can also be significant in our history. We make the choice; this is what we have agreed we believe. Will we uphold it?

Beginning with this issue and for this year we want to lift out several Articles from the Confession and explore how women are living out particular aspects of our theology. How do our lives reflect what we say we believe? Article 15—Ministry and Leadership will be our starting point. Our writers have struggled with call as they moved into ministry. As I received their articles I was blessed by their fidelity in seeking God's will.

Ministry and leadership are tested in the context of the congregation where gifts are used and affirmed. To become a representative for Christ in the church and in the world—what a privilege and what a responsibility. Those in ministry and leadership "preach and teach with authority, interpret the Scriptures and faith diligently, speak divine truth with boldness, equip the saints, relate with compassion to the needy, and lead the congregation in faithful living, so that the church may be 'built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God'" (draft for Wichita, page 20, lines 15-18). I thank God for those among us who are willing to be our ministers. I invite you to join me in prayer for our leaders and for those God is calling into leadership.



Bek Linsenmeyer is editor of *Window to Mission,* working one-third time out of the Newton office. She lives outside of Inman, Kan., with her husband and two children.

What does God want?

by Ingrid Schultz

"We believe that ministry continues the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world."

This opening line from Article 15 of our new Confession of Faith was echoed in the message given at my ordination on Oct. 15, 1995. Juan Laureano, pastor of Iglesia Menonita Getsemani in Chicago, said that all of us at Comunidad de Fe Mennonite Church were being called by God to use our gifts for building up the body of Christ. The participation of the children, youth, women and men of the congregation in the ordination service confirmed his words. We all left the service encouraged and empowered for ministry. We are the body of Christ!

Since I believe it is the task of the church to call forth the gifts of its members, I am grateful to my brothers and sisters at Comunidad de Fe for helping me discern and respond to God's call to pastoral ministry. I confess that I didn't make the task very easy for them. The congregation first invited me to be their pastor when Gamaliel Falla, the former pastor and my supervisor, announced that he was leaving to start a new work in Miami. I replied with a very definite "NO!" I had come to Chicago from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary to participate in the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education program. After serving with Mennonite Central Committee for seven years in Bolivia, I wanted to learn more about the Hispanic community in North America. However, the church's invitation for me to stay on as pastor didn't make sense. God couldn't possibly want a single, Anglo woman from Canada to pastor this Hispanic congregation in Chicago!

Three and a half years after finally saying 'yes' to the congregation and to God's nudge to let go of my fears, I was ordained at Comunidad de Fe. Many who were important to my coming to that point were present: Anabaptist women pastors from Chicago, Hispanic pastors, friends from the "Support Circle" (a group of single Mennonite women with a commitment to service and working with the poor), my mother and sister, Gertrude Roten from AMBS, Erwin Cornelsen (my former pastor from Vancouver), and of course, brothers and sisters from Comunidad de Fe.

In an emotional moment of the service the men of the church each got up with a red carnation in hand and said something affirming about my ministry. Some of them cried. I did too. For me they were tears of joy. Joy: that infallible sign of the Holy Spirit's presence among us.

Erwin Cornelsen

Ingrid Schultz is originally from Vancouver, B.C., where she was a member of Sherbroke Mennonite Church. Ingrid, an AMBS graduate, came to Chicago after service with MCC in Bolivia and Canada.

Communidad de Fe is an Anabaptist Biblical Institute center. Your contributions make possible WM's support of the Commission on Home Ministries.

Jubilee: A gift of ministry

by Sandi Hannigan

Wanted: Writers for Jubilee: God's Good News; the new Anabaptist Sunday school curriculum.

This advertisement inviting applications for a writing assignment caught my eye. I was well acquainted with its forerunner, Foundation Series; my mother was one of the writers.

I considered the invitation and my ensuing contract to write to be a gift from God, a holy calling. As I wrote, I saw the task as a ministry, an opportunity to minister to children, teachers, parents and congregations. Here was a chance to co-create with my Creator God, a time to be a co-learner.

Writing Jubilee was life-changing. As I wrote I began to rethink previously unchallenged theology. I looked at familiar biblical stories with new eyes. My quarter was entitled "Be New Citizens." This new citizenship was beginning with me. With a new vision, I saw the gospel as good news for the poor, oppressed, powerless, abandoned, weak, hopeless and excluded—the gospel of the underdog. I began to read the Scriptures from a prophetic perspective.

The emphasis is on "enoughness," not abundance. This ideology rests on the premise that God is a free God, who continually does new and surprising things.

There were many growth points for me as I wrote. My biggest challenge was stepping out of the familiar and risking new ways of understanding the kingdom of God. For this gift I am all the richer!

Sandi Hannigan, in addition to writing for Jubilee, is mother of Patrick and James, a part-time master's in theology student at Conrad Grebel College and Christian education coordinator at Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ont.

Wanted: Christian Education Coordinator at Erb Street Mennonite Church.

Another ministry opportunity sparked my interest. Little did I know how my writing for Jubilee would open the door to yet another gift of ministry.

Presently I am on staff as Christian education coordinator at Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ont. I find my work so energizing and exhilarating it seems more like play. I continue to wonder at God's mysterious hand. "One of the reasons we hired you, Sandi, is because of your Jubilee writing experience," said my pastor, Renee Sauder. "That is a gift to our congregation." Little did I know how one ministry would lead to another. As I participate in God's creative work, God continues to gift and empower me for new opportunities of service.

Ministry is never an end in itself but always a door to another opportunity. Ministry and leadership prepare me for the next chapter on the journey. I wonder what new and surprising things God wants to do in my life. I wonder where God's mysterious and good hand will lead me in the future.

Your giving allows WM to support the Commission on Education's Jubilee curriculum training.

I stand amazed: Mexico City ministry

by Jeannie Zehr, secretary of mission communications

"Did you see anyone in the growth group you think might become a leader?" asked Commission on Overseas Mission worker Carmen Miniño as we returned home from a meeting of the Bosques growth group in the southern part of Mexico City.

I quickly nodded, explaining, "Lettie and her husband are well educated and growing in their Christian faith." Carmen smiled, nodding her head in agreement. Lettie first came to the church about a year ago when a medical team from Canada was available in the Bosques area for three days. Vicente Miniño knocked on Lettie's gate to ask if they could hold the clinic in the little three-room school on the first level of her house. Lettie agreed and recruited some friends to provide lodging and meals for the team. Because of that initial contact and the faithful evangelizing of the Miniños, Lettie and her husband Horacio and their two teenage children accepted Christ. Lettie dreams of becoming a missionary someday. Now she studies at the university to become a lawyer and Horacio studies public administration.

"How about at San Francisco and the Coyoacan groups?" Carmen continued her quizzing. It was easy to recall names of people who led out in singing and prayer. As we eagerly exchanged dreams for the future of the Mennonite church and its potential leadership, it was refreshing to reflect on the many new Christians I'd met in the city's Anabaptist mission work. Most were baptized in the last two years. Some were waiting for the cold mountain stream water to warm up so baptism could be scheduled.

Karen McCabe Juhnke (L) and Jeannie Zehr, COM staff members, receive gifts from children at the San Francisco growth group during a January trip to Mexico City.

Mexican women are playing important roles in the church. Two serve in paid positions on area mission teams, one as missionary-in-training and another in teaching and outreach ministries. Several are enrolled in the new Anabaptist Theological Institute courses. Sophie, a widow, has opened the large patio area of her home to the Colonia Reforma church group as their meeting place. The night I visited their prayer and praise meeting, despite the cold patio and the smell of a nearby sewage ditch, it was a place warm in Christian fellowship and God's presence. As a visitor I felt I was standing on tiptoe, anticipating an exciting future for the Mennonite church of Mexico City.

Your giving contributes to WM's support of this church planting ministry in Mexico City through the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Meet Women's World Outreach Fund recipient Meg Rouse

by Bek Linsenmeyer

Meg Rouse of Culpepper, Va., is a new Women's World Outreach Fund recipient. Women in Mission leaders established the Women's World Outreach Fund in the early 1980s. WM delegation visits to Zaire in 1972 and to Taiwan and Japan in 1981 reinforced awareness of the need for leadership training for women. Meg joins this group of recipients who together have received more than $108,000 in financial support from WM.

Meg is taking the "Leading God's People" courses of the Pastoral Studies Distance Education program through Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. It is a pastoral leadership training program and uses a local mentor to work through five prescribed courses.

"To begin I must admit that I am enjoying the course work immensely," wrote Meg of her studies which began last fall. Originally from Philadelphia, Meg moved to Virginia from Denver, where she had lived for almost 14 years. During the time in Denver Meg worked first for US West, then went on to form her own consulting business. Her skills were employed by numerous companies for motivational workshops and seminars.

Meg has two birth children, two grandchildren, and has now adopted three foster children. Her involvement in foster care grew out of her love for children and working as a child advocate. Also concerned about illiteracy among youth, Meg founded and co-sponsored a number of literacy programs. Because of her public service she has received numerous awards and a citation from the United Nations.

Ron Williams

Meg Rouse now lives in Culpepper, Va., where she is studying with the intent of entering pastoral ministry. Meg is again involved with youth work and is in the foster care certification process.

A cousin first brought her into the Mennonite church while she still lived in Pennsylvania. In Denver she spent years in other denominations before becoming a member of Peace Mennonite Church in Aurora, Colo., in 1994. There she was involved in worship leading, care groups and teaching.

An experience of healing strengthened her faith and has led her into pastoral ministry. Meg believes that God will guide her in how to utilize the training she is receiving for ministry in the Mennonite church.

Roundtable

by guest columnist Jeanette Hanson

The United Nations Conference on Women held in Beijing this past September attracted much media attention as did the Non-Government Organizations Forum on Women, held concurrently in Huairou, China. Commission on Overseas Mission worker Jeanette Hanson attended the NGO forum and has provided us with reflections on the conference. —Susan Jantzen, WM Coordinator

Rachel is weeping for her children (from Jeremiah 31:15).

The NGO Forum on Women, where over 36,000 women met and where over 6,000 presentations were made, was the most intense, emotionally exhausting experience of my life. I expected to hear from people from all over the world, I didn't expect the bombardment of stories of suffering.

Kurdish women told of atrocities done to their sisters in Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. One Kurdish woman spoke in English, saying, "You do not know how it feels to have no one use your real name, never to be able to speak your own language." Kurds are told to assimilate into the societies in which they live, but in some countries they are not allowed to engage in business, open a bank account or have access to health care. She asked, "How long do we have to suffer—oppressed in our own land? Will the world forget us?"

A Fijian woman wept at one workshop as she talked about the frustration and powerlessness she felt related to nuclear testing in the South Pacific. The next morning we woke up to reports that France had detonated yet another nuclear device in that area.

While the media picked up on more sensational themes from the conference, the majority of women were demanding changes in areas that many of us take for granted: safety, health and education for children. An Algerian woman wants her daughter to be able to go to school in safety. A Bangladeshi woman wants pregnant women to be able to get adequate health care. There were many tears in these workshops and the cry in my heart also became "How long?"

There were also rays of hope. A Somali woman told of women demanding that tribal leaders meet together. Problems were solved as the men ate the meal the women prepared. The World Association of Girl Scouts presented a peace curriculum they are

Continued on page 16

OF THE UNITED NAT

(L-R) Margaret Metzler, Jeanette Hanson and Dennette Alwine, Mennonite mission workers at the U.N. Conference on Women.

Facts & figures

by Susan Jantzen

Thank you, WM groups, for turning in your annual reports last fall. Each March the president of each group receives a **compilation of program ideas** from all across the United States and Canada. Ask to see these lists if you are on the program committee. Some new ideas this year: "Hanging of the Greens" for Christmas followed by a meal together, and a group to pray for the church and individuals.

The **Mission Partner Program** is at its highest number of matches yet, reports Jeannie Zehr of the Commission on Overseas Mission. There are 134 matches, 106 churches and 67 workers matched up. Thanks to all the women's groups who contribute to support mission workers.

Integration progress: Women in Mission and Women's Missionary and Service Commission have formed an **integration committee**. This group is responding to the vote at Wichita '95 to move toward integration and will present a proposal to the WM and WMSC executives which will meet jointly Oct. 17-19, 1996. Members of the committee are:

WM:
Helga Froese
Box 294
Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0

Phyllis Schultz
692 Road 527
Bloomfield, MT 59315

Susan Jantzen
WM Coordinator

WMSC:
Rose Covington
Chicago, Ill.

Joy Hess
Goshen, Ind.

Marian Hostetler
WMSC Executive Secretary

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

The church has been blessed by your sharing through Women in Mission. Thank you! Here are our year-end figures for 1995:

	1994	1995
Feb. '94 - Jan. '95		
United States (in U.S. dollars)	$103,435.82	$ 97,526.08
Canada (in Canadian dollars)	115,138.86	101,950.72
Percent of GCWM budget reached	97.5%	89.1%

Window shopping

May Fellowship Day: Friday, May 3

Sponsored by Church Women United (CWU)

Loving Our Neighbor in a Broken World is the theme for this year's ecumenical service. Working for a just, caring and peaceful society, CWU invites us to examine ways we can help bind up the brokenness of others. The importance of loving our neighbors is demonstrated through stories of individuals whose lives have been torn by violence. Learn about loving, creative responses to the inhumanity in our midst. For more information write: Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10015 or call 1-800-298-5551.

Loving Our Neighbor In A Broken World
MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY
May 3, 1996

ROUNDTABLE, Cont. from page 14

using in groups around the world. One American-Chinese woman told us that she was alive today because her grandfather, as a new Christian in China, decided that it would not be right to drown the baby girl who became this woman's mother.

Amid many challenges I felt impressed with the great need to love the people around us. We still need to lend a hand, give a listening ear, or share tears with the Rachels who are weeping, whether they are across the street or around the world. The hope and love found in Christ is for everyone.

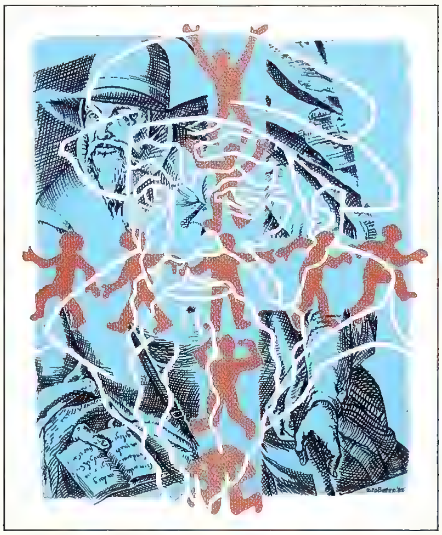
Forward

In future issues we will explore practical implications of selected articles from the Confession of Faith. For our summer issue we will reflect on Christian stewardship. How is our life set apart for God's use? How are we called to be managers for God? Is how we live now truly a model of the new heaven and the new earth?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

After Menno's death, his followers in the Netherlands went in many different directions. As soon as persecution ended (the last Anabaptist martyr in the Low Countries was executed in 1590) the Mennonites underwent a remarkable transformation. Before the end of the sixteenth century, the Mennonites, once feared and derided as heretics, became more and more accepted and valued as respectable citizens. They contributed greatly to the Dutch Golden Age of the seventeenth century, especially in the arts, sciences, trade, and industry.

Symbolic Portrait of Menno Simons
Serigraph by Aizo Betten,
commissioned by the Menno-500
Committee in the Netherlands (1995)
(Doopsgezinde Bibliotheek,
UB-Amsterdam)



Elsewhere in Europe, Mennonites were still persecuted by Church and State. Many Swiss and South German Mennonites found refuge in America; those in Poland emigrated to Russia and from there to Canada, the United States and Central and South America. Today they are divided into a great variety of groups, just as their fellow Mennonites in the Netherlands once were. Again and again, however, through all of the different developments, one can recognize the foundation laid by Menno, based on I Cor. 3:11 ("For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ").

Due to their early assimilation centuries ago, the Dutch Mennonites of today differ somewhat from their brothers and sisters in Russia and on the American continent. The distance from the Mennonites in Africa and Asia, who have no genealogical ties to the Old World, is even greater. Yet especially in this anniversary year, there is every reason to hold up as a mirror the journey of Menno Simons and his spiritual descendants in the land of his origin. Their story of transformation from persecution to acceptance has been told time and time again in historical studies. But never has it come to life so strikingly as in this richly illustrated commemorative book.

Window shopping

May Fellowship Day: Friday, May 3

Sponsored by Church Women United (CWU)

Loving Our Neighbor in a Broken World is the theme for this year's ecumenical service. Working for a just, caring and peaceful society, CWU invites us to examine ways we can help bind up the brokenness of others. The importance of loving our neighbors is demonstrated through stories of individuals whose lives have been torn by violence. Learn about loving, creative responses to the inhumanity in our midst. For more information write: Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10015 or call 1-800-298-5551.

Loving Our Neighbor In A Broken World
MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY
May 3, 1996

ROUNDTABLE, Cont. from page 14

using in groups around the world. One American-Chinese woman told us that she was alive today because her grandfather, as a new Christian in China, decided that it would not be right to drown the baby girl who became this woman's mother.

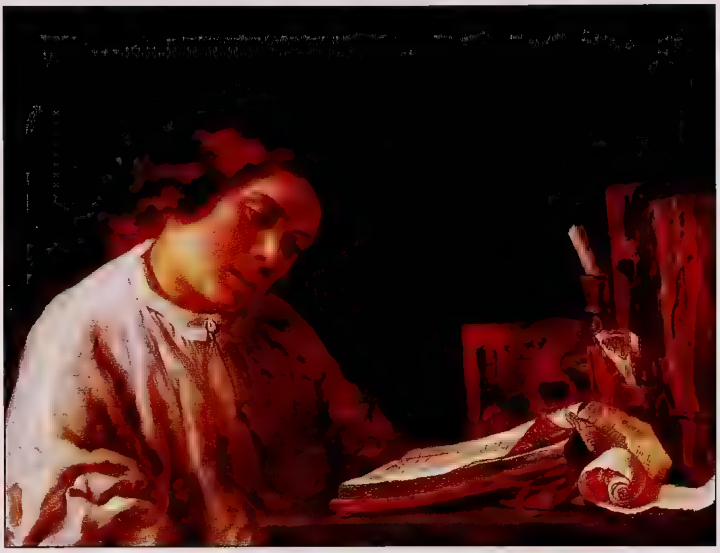
Amid many challenges I felt impressed with the great need to love the people around us. We still need to lend a hand, give a listening ear, or share tears with the Rachels who are weeping, whether they are across the street or around the world. The hope and love found in Christ is for everyone.

Forecast

In future issues we will explore practical implications of selected articles from the Confession of Faith. For our summer issue we will reflect on Christian stewardship. How is our life set apart for God's use? How are we called to be managers for God? Is how we live now truly a model of the new heaven and the new earth?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

3. The Changing Image of Menno and the Mennonites in Dutch Art (ca. 1535-ca. 1740)



Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678), *Selfportrait with Vanitas*, painted in 1644, several years before he was banned from the Mennonite church in Dordrecht (Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam)

Finally, the third section is a visual history of the first 200 years of the Dutch Mennonites and their changing position in society. Gruesome martyr scenes are followed by rare prints and paintings that ridicule Menno and Mennonites. A wide sample of 16th- and 17th-century portraits of Mennonite preachers, writers, artists and scholars illustrate the growing societal and cultural integration of the Mennonites. Finally, a selection of fascinating family portraits shows the growing prosperity and self-assurance of the once *Stillen im Lande.*

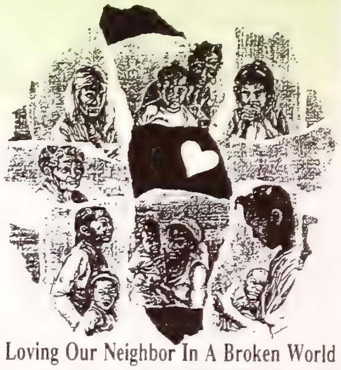
This section includes many masterpieces from the Dutch Golden Age by painters such as Govert Flinck, Frans Hals, Karel van Mander and Rembrandt van Rijn.

Window shopping

May Fellowship Day: Friday, May 3

Sponsored by Church Women United (CWU)

Loving Our Neighbor in a Broken World is the theme for this year's ecumenical service. Working for a just, caring and peaceful society, CWU invites us to examine ways we can help bind up the brokenness of others. The importance of loving our neighbors is demonstrated through stories of individuals whose lives have been torn by violence. Learn about loving, creative responses to the inhumanity in our midst. For more information write: Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10015 or call 1-800-298-5551.



Loving Our Neighbor In A Broken World
MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY
May 3, 1996

ROUNDTABLE, Cont. from page 14

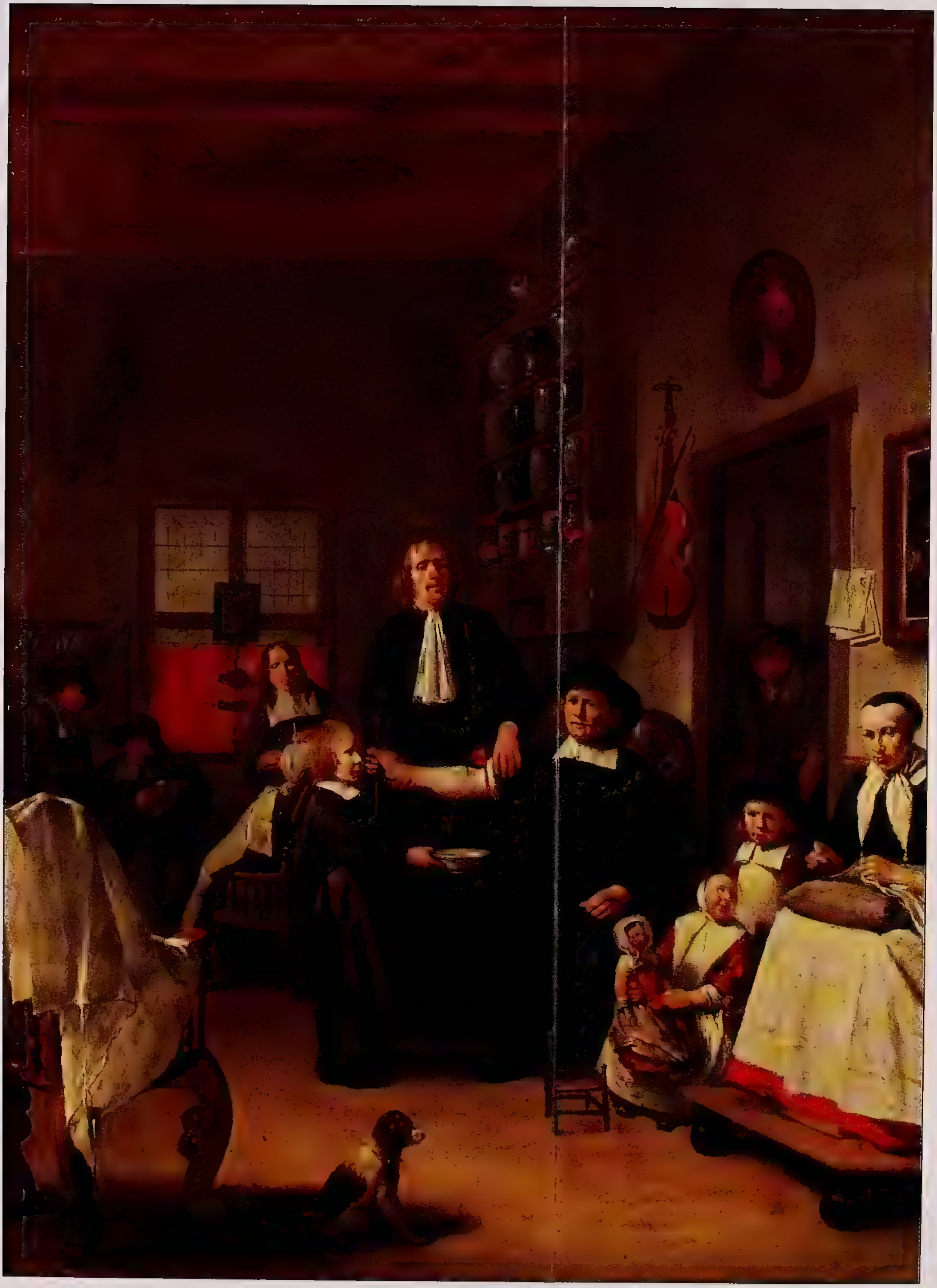
using in groups around the world. One American-Chinese woman told us that she was alive today because her grandfather, as a new Christian in China, decided that it would not be right to drown the baby girl who became this woman's mother.

Amid many challenges I felt impressed with the great need to love the people around us. We still need to lend a hand, give a listening ear, or share tears with the Rachels who are weeping, whether they are across the street or around the world. The hope and love found in Christ is for everyone.

Forecast

In future issues we will explore practical implications of selected articles from the Confession of Faith. For our summer issue we will reflect on Christian stewardship. How is our life set apart for God's use? How are we called to be managers for God? Is how we live now truly a model of the new heaven and the new earth?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt



Egbert van Heemskerck, *The Mennonite Surgeon Jacob Fransz Hercules and His Family* (1669) (Amsterdams Historisch Museum)

Two specialists in Dutch Anabaptist-Mennonite studies are overseeing the international project, which will result in separate Dutch, German, and English editions: Mary Sprunger, history professor at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia (U.S.A), and Piet Visser, curator of the Mennonite Library and professor of the cultural history of manuscript and book printing, both at the University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands). Several other scholars are contributing to the realization of the project. The layout of this handsome book, approximately 160 pages long, is in the expert hands of the Amsterdam graphic designer Esther van Weelden.

The entire production is being carried out by two renowned printinghouses operated by Mennonite families: Knijnenberg Printers in Krommenie (the Netherlands), and the Friesens Corporation in Altona, Manitoba (Canada) in cooperation with Herald Press, Eastern Mennonite University and the University of Amsterdam. Thanks to their efforts, the pre-publication price is only U.S. $ 35 or Can. $ 48 (by subscription before March 31, 1996). After its appearance in June or July 1996, the price will increase substantially.

Consider treating yourself, family or friends to this special gift. Don't hesitate to send the subscription form before March 31, 1996. Not only does this secure for you a cultural monument to the rich Anabaptist past, but also your name will be included in a *tabula gratulorum* printed in each book. Join the global Anabaptist/Mennonite community in celebrating the 500th birthday of the leader who lent his name to the Mennonite church, Menno Simons.

Conditions for Subscription

In order to obtain the book *MENNO SIMONS: Places, Portraits and Progeny* at the pre-publication price of U.S. $ 35.00 / Cdn. $48.00 and to ensure inclusion in the list of subscribers – the *tabula gratulorum* – complete the enclosed form (please print or type). As soon as the book is finished, your order will be sent to you at no charge. Subscription can only be guaranteed if both the form and payment are received at the above address before the deadline. Orders must be received before April 30th.

U.S. Orders:
Masthof Press
Route 1, Box 20
Morgantown, PA 19543-9701
Telephone: (610) 286-0258
Fax: (610) 286-6860

Canadian Orders:
Friesens Corporation
One Printers Way, Box 720
Altona, MB R0G 0B0
Telephone: (204) 324-5018
Fax: (204) 324-1601

On the cover: J.G. Loef, detail from *The Catholic Church Portrayed as a Ship* (1640-1649)
(Museum Catharijneconvent Utrecht)

Printed in Canada

News

CPTers help close crack house

Washington (CPT)—Residents of the Columbia Heights neighborhood and members of Christian Peacemaker Teams closed a Washington crack house Feb. 27. It was the second such house closed with CPT's help in the past two years.

The first crack house was shut down in December 1994, shortly after CPT initiated its Project in Urban Peacemaking in the Columbia Heights neighborhood. The neighborhood is also home to the Sojourners community, which initially invited CPT. CPT and its contacts in the neighborhood campaigned to close the house, registering complaints with the police and with the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA). The owner of that house is now serving a six-year jail sentence for housing violations and tax evasion.

On Feb. 27, after more lobbying, CPTers and others from the neighborhood watched as an inspector from the DCRA and local police officers closed 2719 13th Street N.W.

Inspectors found several violations and cited the owner of the house, Russell Hughes. Electricity was turned off, and the occupants, most of whom were squatters, were told to vacate the premises due to unsafe living conditions.

After the morning raid, observers entered the house and were stunned by the stench caused by raw human waste in buckets, dysfunctional toilets and bathtubs. Maggots covered spoiled food in a refrigerator. Drug paraphernalia such as needles, razor blades and pills were strewn throughout the rooms. Used condoms and wrappers littered the floor. While electric power had been on recently, the residents had not had water since June.

Hughes faced fines due to the housing violations unless he vacated occupants from the building. Two residents remained inside the house and were notified by police officers to leave by 4 p.m. CPT worker Tammy Krause arranged for temporary housing, which was not utilized by the occupants. The occupants left the building by the required time, and the house was secured by the owner, Hughes.

A Tuesday evening "Orange Hat Patrol" (a community safety patrol) inspected the building around 8 p.m. and celebrated that it was empty and peaceful. The community patrols are another result of CPT initiatives.

Paul Dahmus, a neighborhood resident, has been concerned about the poor conditions of 2719 13th Street N.W. for the past 10 years. Dahmus became aware of Russell Hughes in

CPT

Neighborhood watch: *Christian Peacemaker Teams member Wes Hare (left) and Columbia Heights resident Bill Golden prepare for neighborhood patrol.*

Inside the news

CPTers ride bus route recently bombed by terrorists / p. 14

Burundi MCCers respond to growing violence / p. 14

Church worker witnesses execution / p. 16

Arts weekend focuses on the body / p. 17

MEDA offers loans to Tanzanian women / p. 17

Minister walks by faith / p. 19

Pastor empowers immigrants / p. 20

First Mennonite Church, Geary, Okla., is making plans to discontinue as a congregation. They are arranging to give their building to the city of Geary to be used as a library. Their final service will be held March 31. Clifford Koehn has served as pastor since 1975.

• • •

The General Conference Mennonite Church received 96.9 percent or $4,309,262 of its $4,446,767 U.S. budget for the 1995 fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31. "Thanks to the donations ... in January, the General Conference ended the fiscal year better than expected," said Ted Stuckey, business manager. The General Conference received $25,294 less in the 1995 fiscal year than in 1994.

• • •

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has been named to the John Templeton Foundation's Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges. The roll evaluates institutions based on the way each school "encourages students to explore ... moral reasoning processes, fosters positive attitude and ... well-being, encourages spiritual growth and moral values, promotes community building values and advocates a drug-free lifestyle."

McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ont., will host the 12th Believers' Church Conference Oct. 17-19. The theme is "The Believers' Church: A Voluntary Church." For information contact Dr. William Brackney, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, ON L8S 4K1, (905) 525-9140.

• • •

The June Schwartzentruber Fund assists people in church-related service, particularly in peace and justice concerns, urban ministry and cross-cultural projects. Applications are being received until April 30. Contact Mary Burkholder, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, (519) 650-3806.

• • •

Terrance M. Rempel of Tofield, Alta., has received the eighth annual Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund award of $2,500 in support for his studies in Middle Eastern politics—Jerusalem studies at the University of Exeter, England. He is studying the contemporary history of Jerusalem within the context of a nonviolent Anabaptist framework.

• • •

The children's Sunday school program at First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., helped realize a dream of South African Rommel Roberts. Roberts, a Quaker community development and peace worker, wanted to provide chickens for farms in rural South Africa. She visited Mennonite friends in New Jersey, who helped connect her to Ivan Moyer of Moyer's Chicks in Quakertown, Pa. He introduced her to a chicken breeder in Massachusetts, and the Allentown children raised funds to purchase 83 chickens for Roberts, who was able to thank the children when she visited the church in February.

1988, when a fire in one of his houses burned three small children to death. "We know that the community has to keep on these dangerous neighborhood places. We are learning how to make things happen. I'm pleased to add this second neighborhood nuisance to our list of closings, which we expect to continue to grow."

CPTers ride bus route struck by bombers

Newton, Kan.—Christian Peacemaker Teams members in Hebron, West Bank, rode a Jerusalem bus March 10 on a route that had been bombed two weeks in a row.

Bus number 18 was bombed by terrorists on consecutive Sundays, Feb. 25 and March 3. Twenty-eight were killed and 76 injured in the first attack. Nineteen were killed and 10 injured in the second. The team members planned to ride the bus on the next consecutive Sunday, March 10.

"We feel that the repeated attacks on bus number 18 constitute an implied threat for next Sunday morning," the CPTers wrote in a March 6 statement. "Therefore we feel called to respond to this threat by stating publicly that if bus number 18 is attacked next Sunday, CPT Hebron will be on it."

The ride went off smoothly, remarkable mainly in increased presence of military personnel. CPT member Kathleen Kern broke a week-long fast at morning worship at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jerusalem after the team's 2 1/2-hour ride.

The team has been in Hebron since June 1995 witnessing for nonviolence. Two were arrested for 48 hours Feb. 28 following a wave of house demolitions. The Israeli government demolished several houses in response to the first bus bombing. CPT members stood on the roof of a Hebron home slated for demolition to protest the action. Dianne Roe and Robert Naiman, both part of the Hebron team, spent two days in jail Feb. 28-29 and were then placed under house arrest until their deportation hearing, originally set for March 4. That hearing was postponed when an Israeli crackdown followed the second bus bombing. At press time the CPTers did not know if and when their deportation hearings would be rescheduled.

The CPTers were arrested Feb. 28 when they and two other team members stood on the roof of the Al Zaloum family home, scheduled for demolition by the Israeli Defense Force. Roe and Naiman were charged with (1) being in a closed military area, (2) ignoring an order to leave, (3) inciting Palestinians against the Israeli military, (4) (specific to Naiman) being a member of Hamas (a militant Palestinian independence movement).

The soldiers who arrested Naiman pushed his face to the ground, saying, "Eat! Eat!," filling his nose and mouth with dirt. Before their release the two were brought before a judge, Roe in handcuffs and Naiman in leg irons. They were released from the jail into house arrest in Hebron after an Israeli friend posted bonds equaling about $1,000 U.S. for each of them. Both Roe and Naiman have been barred from talking about house demolition and from attending daily prayers.

Regarding the last two charges, the team reports that most of the team's time on the roof was spent in prayer and song, and "the gathered Palestinians did not need our presence to feel outrage." The team also denied any association with Hamas.

The team reports that the deportation of Roe and Naiman for nonviolently protesting the destruction of a Palestinian home would set a precedent for the future deportation of the remainder of CPT in Hebron and of all international activists. The team also notes that subsequent to Roe and Naiman's arrest, Prime Minister Shimon Peres cancelled the remaining orders for house demolitions in Hebron that day. *Larry Penner*

Burundi MCCers respond to growing violence

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Two Mennonite Central Committee peace presence volunteers in Burundi are moving closer to the violence of that country's civil war.

Keith Miller and Susan Seitz requested their transfer to Bubanza, a town near the site of fierce fighting between the Tutsi army and Hutu rebel militia.

"MCC has made the decision to accept the risks involved in the interest of encouraging peace," says Lauren

Yoder, MCC Burundi country co-representative.

Up to 1,000 people a month have been killed as Burundi's civil conflict intensifies. Observers have called the situation "creeping genocide," reports Mennonite Central Committee Africa administrator Eric Olfert, who visited Burundi in late December 1995.

"Why Bubanza? It is a small enough place that our actions would be very visible," explain Miller and Seitz. "Bubanza seems to us at the heart of Burundi's problems, and therefore the logical place to act. If things could turn around there, we could foresee a spill-over effect."

MCC asks for prayer for Miller, of Nairobi, Kenya, and Seitz, of Holt, Mich. "Pray for their safety and effectiveness in helping Burundians find peaceful ways to resolve conflict," requests Olfert, who notes the first month or two will be most risky as the MCC workers' presence may be met with initial suspicion.

Miller

Seitz

Seitz, a nurse, will do community health education in conjunction with Bubanza's Roman Catholic hospital. She and Miller will also organize peace activities, including interethnic peace committees, where community leaders can share information and search for ways to solve disputes. Both recently served in similar assignments in Kibimba, Burundi.

"On reflecting about our role in the country, we concluded Kibimba is now on the track to peace, and we should put into place similar structures in a more volatile area," the two write.

A violent incident Dec. 13, 1995, called into question the safety of foreign nongovernmental organization (NGO) workers in Burundi. Grenades were thrown into the yards of four NGOs in Gitega—the Red Cross, Oxfam, a French and a Spanish NGO. Some speculate the military was involved.

U.S. government representatives urged nongovernmental organizations not to place workers in much of rural Burundi. MCC administrators met with Burundian Quaker church leader David Niyonzima, who was in North America for MCC meetings earlier this month. "We need all the people you can send us to help us be true to our ideals of how people should relate. If you wait until Bubanza is completely safe, the MCC workers will not be needed there," Niyonzima told them. He said he felt expatriates are not in great danger unless they are perceived as taking sides.

MCC has had peace presence teams in Burundi for a year. Both army and rebels have avoided violence when expatriate observers are present. Olfert believes the presence of MCC teams has saved dozens, possibly hundreds, of lives.

Christians killing Christians

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A particularly disturbing feature of the violence in Burundi, as in neighboring Rwanda, is the fact that 80 to 90 percent of both countries' citizens are Christians. How can Christians continue to kill each other in ethnic conflict?

According to the young Burundian head of the country's Inter-Varsity movement, part of the answer lies in Burundi's history. Missionaries brought the gospel of salvation, but the focus was vertical, emphasizing one's relation to God but not to others. In general, Christians were taught living a good Christian life meant marital fidelity, attending church and avoiding alcohol. Relating to one's neighbors was not emphasized. "This is why we can be 90 percent Christian yet kill in the name of ethnicity," this young Christian says. He believes the Burundian churches need broader education of church leaders and to read the Bible also for its horizontal dimension of love and ethics. "If that can happen the church can save this country," he says. *Ardell Stauffer*

Operatic tenor Ben Heppner will present a benefit concert at this fall's convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, meeting in Winnipeg. The Nov. 2 public concert will benefit MEDA programming. *The New York Times* says of Heppner, "He simply has no peers at the moment," and *Maclean's* calls him "one of the fastest-rising stars on the international opera scene."

• • •

America now imprisons more people than Russia, reports the December 1995 issue of *The Economist*. According to statistics released in December, 565 out of every 100,000 Americans are behind bars. And although blacks comprise only 13 percent of the population, they account for almost half the country's 1.4 million inmates. The total crime rate has fallen since 1980, but the number of inmates has tripled. The prison population has risen almost 10 times faster than the rate of violent crime. (*World Press Review*)

• • •

Dr. Carl Epp received a medical contribution award Feb. 10 from Taiwan's Ministry of Health for his 13 years of service at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan. Epp, who now resides in Winnipeg, served in Taiwan with the Commission on Overseas Mission from 1972-1991. "This is not my award. I could not have done this work without my wife Hilda, COM missionaries and all the staff at Mennonite Christian Hospital," said Epp. "We do not work in isolation ... we work as a team in the faith community." (His wife died in July 1995.)

The internet and the electronic culture will be the focus of the annual Council on Church and Media convention to be held in Toronto May 30-June 1. For information contact Dave Linscheid, executive secretary, e-mail davel@gcmc.org, fax (316) 283-0454, telephone (316) 283-5100, or P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.

• • •

In celebration of Menno Simons' 500th birthday, two Mennonite printers, Kees Knijnenberg of the Netherlands and David Friesen of Manitoba, are collaborating on the production of a richly illustrated coffee table book, *Menno Simons: Places, Portraits and Progeny* (see the insert in this issue). The authors are Mary Sprunger, history professor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and Piet Visser, curator of the Mennonite Library in Amsterdam and professor of manuscripts and printing at the University of Amsterdam. The book is due out this fall.

• • •

Eleven people from the United States and Canada participated in a MENNO (Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas) project in Colombia Feb. 3-17. They helped with building projects at the Mennonite school and retreat center in Cachipay. They also had the opportunity to learn about the work of the Colombia Mennonite Church. "It was a learning experience for me. I gained a new appreciation for the freedom we have in Canada. Here there aren't bars on our windows or soldiers patrolling the streets," said Stan Gingerich, Sardis, B.C. The project is sponsored by the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church in partnership with the Colombia Mennonite Church.

Church worker witnesses execution

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—"I don't think I'll ever see the color yellow again without thinking of that stupid chair," says Mary Bucher, Mennonite Board of Missions local program coordinator in Mashulaville, Miss.

On Feb. 16, Bucher and Wanda Kuhns, a former voluntary service worker, traveled to a prison in Atmore, Ala., to witness the execution of Edward Horsley. Horsley was convicted of the 1977 sexual assault and murder of a 16-year-old North Carolina resident. After 19 years on death row, Horsley was electrocuted.

Bucher first wrote to Horsley after he had been on death row for about a year. She had read an article in a Church of the Brethren publication about death-row inmates.

"It said that people on death row are the most forgotten of all inmates," she says. The article prompted Bucher to find the name of a death-row inmate to write. Edward Horsley was the name she received.

"Ed was an avid writer. He would write volumes of stuff," Bucher says. "Ed didn't waste his time in prison. He finished his high school diploma and got an associate's degree in science during his time on death row. He also did a lot in prison with other men. He helped those who couldn't read learn to read, while he helped others quit smoking and have a better attitude toward each other."

Over the years, Bucher and Horsley developed a friendship. "When I moved to Mississippi, I felt like he was really encouraging to me," Bucher says. "Ed felt free to speak his mind, too. He would confront me on faith issues where he thought I was wrong."

During Horsley's time on death row, Bucher learned a lot about the legal system and what she calls a lack of justice in it. "It doesn't matter if you're innocent. The Supreme Court said that. All that matters is that all the legal steps have been followed. Nothing else matters. It doesn't matter if there was discrimination or if you're innocent; they'll execute you anyway," she says.

When the execution became inevitable, Bucher traveled to Atmore to be with Horsley for the final few days of his life. Horsley's family came, and everyone was supportive of one another.

"It was like a family reunion. Everyone rallied around him in support," she says. And on the day of the scheduled execution, Bucher found that Horsley was at peace. "His sister came right up to his face and asked him, 'Are you ready to go?' and Ed just looked at her and said quietly, 'Yeah, I'm ready.'" Bucher says, "But I wasn't ready."

"It doesn't matter if there was discrimination or if you're innocent; they'll execute you anyway."

Bucher

One of Horsley's last requests was for Bucher to pray with him. "I have trouble praying out loud when I'm in an emotional state, so Ed just said to me, 'I'll pray,'" she says.

Just before the guards came to take Horsley away to prepare for the electrocution, Horsley hugged Bucher and told her, "I'll be strong for you, Mary."

Horsley had asked Bucher to come and be a witness to his execution. "We had to sign papers saying that we wouldn't hold the state responsible for any emotional or mental trauma associated with witnessing an execution," she says. "They made us take everything out of our pockets and patted us down several times."

Even though Bucher could not know what to expect, she did have some help. "Ed's lawyer was good at telling us exactly what was going on. He told us that after the hood was put on Ed's head that Ed couldn't see us any longer and we didn't have to look anymore. He said that it would be pretty gruesome," Bucher says. "We didn't look."

Looking back on the nearly two decades that she knew Horsley, Bucher is grateful. "Anytime you invest yourself in people, there can be pain, but it's worth it," she says.

In the midst of her grief over the loss of a close friend, Bucher can also see the hand of God present. "God is the most real when you're dealing with really hard things," she says. "I think God saw Ed through that execution."
Christy Risser

Arts weekend focuses on the body

Cincinnati—Over 200 artists and arts fans gathered in Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship's sanctuary for the third Mennonite Arts Weekend, Feb. 2-4.

The conference explored the theme "The Body in Art and Spirituality, Corporate and Individual."

Dramatists, including "Ted & Lee" and the Hesston Drama Team injected humor into the story of the creation of humans. Playing the parts of the circulatory system, digestive system, nervous system, appendix, "aflincreas," emotions, adrenaline, lungs, brain and heart, the actors auditioned in God's office for parts in the ensemble. All but Aflincreas, who couldn't work with others, got jobs, even though Appendix didn't know what he could contribute to the production.

Katherine Bartel presented her sculpture of a life-sized female body, while several of the *Small Works by Mennonite Artists* exhibited and sold during the weekend featured the human form.

The poems of David Waltner Toews and Raylene Hinz-Penner, who presented workshops, as well as those read by several poets whose works were included in *Living Mirror: Young Mennonite Writers*, used body and sensory imagery.

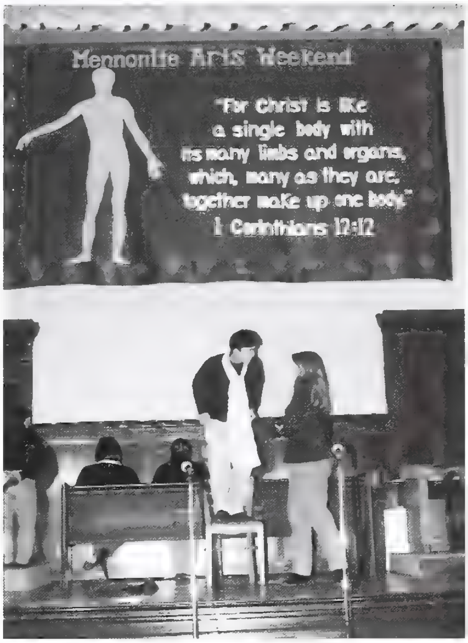
Playwright Esther Wiens told how staging a biblical story is like embodying the Word. Dirk Eitzen talked about some of the ethical quandaries faced when the documentary films he creates produce a disembodying reality.

Artists connected physical processes to creative ones. Several spoke of writing poems while jogging, or creating while walking around and talking out loud.

'Breath and flesh': Composer Brent Weaver, whose *Wrestling Jacob* was commissioned by Mennonite Arts Weekend, thanked Ken Nafziger and the Eastern Mennonite University Singers for "helping me give birth" to his composition in its premiere performance. He noted the collaboration between composer and performers, who give "breath and flesh and existence to those thoughts and emotions I was trying to convey."

In a forum led by advisory board member Ann Hostetler, participants talked about relationships between art, the body and Mennonite theology. "The Incarnation of Jesus is at the center of our theology," Hostetler said.

After some discussion on censorship, including subconscious personal censorship of one's own art, an artist noted that we "have to have a safe place. This is a safe place," she said.
Susan Balzer


Mennonite Arts Weekend
"For Christ is like a single body with its many limbs and organs, which, many as they are, together make up one body."
I Corinthians 12:12

Susan Balzer

Body language: *Hayato Mantano (on chair) and Melanie Unrau of the Hesston (Kan.) College Drama Team perform.*

MEDA offers loans to Tanzanian women

Winnipeg (MEDA)—Ruth Dueck likes to tell the story of a woman in Mbeya, Tanzania, who sells soda pop near a market area. She is a small business owner eking out a living like so many around her. She is also an entrepreneur and her business is growing.

Not too long ago she was selling about a crate of pop each day. Then came short-term loans offered by Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) to women in this agriculture-based community. She got a loan to increase her stock of pop and upped her sales to 50 crates a day. Sometimes there wasn't enough soda for her to buy, so she decided to diversify. A second loan helped her, and

Newspapers and network television news carry few international stories that might change the American public's indifference to world events and foreign policy, reports *American Journalism Review*. The study found that local television news, from which one-fourth of all Americans get most of their news, may all but ignore the world. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Reacting to the news that the Disney empire has bought an American television network (ABC), Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes wrote, "In a world torn by every kind of fundamentalism—religious, ethnic, nationalist and tribal—we must grant first place to economic fundamentalism, with its religious conviction that the market, left to its own devices, is capable of resolving all our problems. This faith has its own ayatollahs. Its church is neo-liberalism; its creed is profit; its prayers are for monopolies; and now its halos are Mickey Mouse ears." (*The United Church Observer*)

• • •

The Schwenkfelders, a religious group much like the Anabaptists, had some interesting domestic remedies in the 1700s. For whooping cough, they recommended placing in a bag around the neck of the patient the hair of one who has never seen his father. An alternative was to give the patient bread and butter spread by one who did not change her family name at marriage. For convulsion fits, take a skein of unwashed yarn, spun by a child under seven years of age, and pass it over the forehead of the patient. Then pass the patient through the skein three times the same way, burn the yarn, gather the ashes and add them to the patient's soup. (*The Schwenkfeldian*)

National Churches Fellowship of Nepal reported that the 11 Christians arrested and imprisoned in September 1994 were released Nov. 9, 1995, Constitution Day in Nepal. The Christians spent almost a year in jail before their trial in August 1995, then three months more after sentencing. They were arrested when leaving a prayer meeting and accused of proselytizing outside a temple and disrupting the Hindu religion, an activity considered illegal by the Nepal government.

• • •

Approximately one-third of the world's 4,000-5,000 livestock breeds are at risk of extinction, reports the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Reporting on the U.N. statement, the *Financial Times* of London says that new, highly specialized breeds are replacing local breeds, which are dying at a projected rate of three breeds every two weeks. Modern breeds can be very productive, but lack the genetic diversity needed to breed animals with characteristics that will let them survive under various conditions. The FAO reports that in 80 percent of the world's rural areas, locally adapted breeds are superior to modern livestock. (*World Press Review*)

• • •

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town, South Africa, stirred controversy at his church's provincial synod recently when he called for an easing of his nation's abortion laws. Abortion is currently illegal in South Africa, except when the mother's health is at risk, the fetus deformed, or the pregnancy a result of incest or rape. Tutu said he hoped "that we can affirm reverence for life and yet ... be willing to [make] abortion a little more easily procurable, especially for poor, rural, uneducated women, and to combat the incidence of back-street abortions." He added that women should not choose abortion lightly. (*Presbyterian Record*)

she now sells milk and baked goods as well.

The pop seller is just one of many Tanzanian women who have benefited from MEDA loans, says Dueck, a credit adviser for the MEDA project in Tanzania. MEDA is an association of business people who, among other things, carry out business-oriented assistance to the poor in developing countries.

Dueck

Dueck left Winnipeg two years ago to help launch the new MEDA loan program in the east African country. She was home recently to visit family in southern Manitoba for a few weeks before heading back to Tanzania, where she works out of the capital city of Dar es Salaam.

Training is a big part of Dueck's role—helping other staff to design the loan programs and deliver training sessions to the borrowers. MEDA offers an 18-week solidarity group loan to women who are engaged in microenterprises—small, owner-operated businesses. The business owners form groups and co-guarantee each other's loans. MEDA will soon begin offering a longer-term loan to individuals as well.

Small business loans for women is a new banking niche in Tanzania—one that is helping a large segment of the population that can't get help elsewhere. "They cannot get access to capital in the small amounts they need at the bank," Dueck says.

Women are the prime focus for loans, although MEDA is starting to accept applications for loans from men. Women have proven to be good credit risks, says Dueck. Overall, MEDA expects to recover over 95 percent of the loans.

The women take their responsibilities seriously. "Motivation to care for their families is a high priority and their business is used for that," Dueck says. "The irony is that within the formal sector, many of the loans have gone to men."

Worldwide, the majority of MEDA's clients for short-term loans are women. MEDA carries out similar lending programs in Nicaragua, Bolivia and Haiti, and is just starting in Russia and Zimbabwe.

So for Dueck, who has been with MEDA for 10 years, this isn't a new concept. She worked with finance in the Winnipeg office before going overseas for some more hands-on work. "I got itchy feet after a while. The international economic development was one of the drawing factors to come to MEDA," she says.

The Tanzania program has taken off with immediate success; women are streaming in to apply. More than 5,000 loans were issued in the first year of the program, many to repeat clients. And this is all in the pilot project in Mbeya, 800 kilometers from Dar es Salaam, where MEDA hopes to begin offering loans in February.

Loan amounts start as low as $100 U.S. on a first loan and go up to $600 U.S. by the third loan. "Credit is best managed in incremental amounts," Dueck says. MEDA charges commercial loan rates, which works out to about 20 percent over an 18-week period (inflation in Tanzania currently ranges from 25 to 40 percent a year).

The loan rates help cover training. With each first-time loan comes four hours of training—an introduction to MEDA, a discussion of principles of credit, the value of microenterprises to the economy, and managing household and business finances.

This all makes good sense businesswise, but it's also a social justice outreach. "It's offering access to people who are typically denied access," Dueck says. "We're giving them a choice and hopefully empowering their choice for the positive."

"The irony is that within the formal sector, many of the loans have gone to men."

Dueck

And so in Mbeya the entrepreneurial spirit is alive. Women are getting loans to sell farm produce wholesale, to set up hair salons, to sew school uniforms and to bake. One woman buys scrap metal and fashions beautiful knives from it. Another woman used her loan to buy star decals. They now grace the packages of her home baking. And she's selling more than ever. And the pop seller? Well, she's in line for a third loan. *Carol Thiessen*

Indonesian minister walks by faith

Southern California (GCMC)—When Sutanto Adi left university so he could be a full-time student at a Bible school in Jakarta, Indonesia, he immediately paid a price for his decision: he was disowned by his family.

As a child, Adi attended a Mennonite church in a small town on the island of Java. His father had become a Christian shortly after Mennonite missionaries arrived in the area in the early 1930s. But that didn't stop his parents' anger over his career choice.

"My parents wanted me to be a medical doctor because I would receive a big salary," explains Adi, who has 14 siblings.

Still, he didn't waver. "God poured his Spirit on me," says Adi, noting that he received his calling at a revival meeting he attended in 1965.

An experience he had one day as he was praying convinced him even more: "I heard the sound of weeping. Then a voice said, 'So many people are crying because they have not heard about salvation.'"

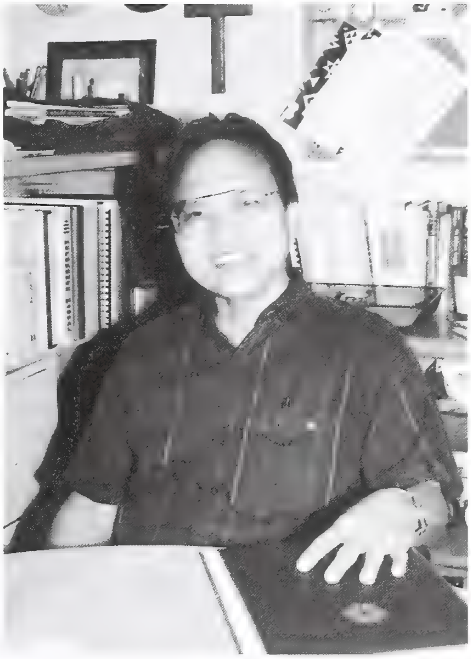
His relatives and friends provided him with the funds to enroll in classes at the Bible school. Once, when he had no money to buy the clothes he desperately needed, a fellow student gave him a suitcase filled with clothing. "I learned to walk by faith," he says.

After three months of separation from his family, they welcomed him back. One of his brothers even gave Adi $1,000 so he could travel to the United States for further studies.

It was while Adi was in the United States that a Mennonite pastor invited him to attend Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. He studied there for one year, then transferred to the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif.

In 1976 Adi returned to Indonesia, where he spent the next 10 years preaching the gospel message in villages. While his evangelistic efforts resulted in over 30 new churches, Adi couldn't stop thinking about the lack of churches for Indonesian people in southern California.

In 1983, he sent an Indonesian couple to start a church in Downey, Calif. Three years later, Adi also decided to move to the area in order to plant more churches. Today, he is the pastor of the Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Hosana, Chino Hills, Calif. He also continues to relate to the churches he started in Indonesia.


Carla Reimer

Sutanto Adi

Currently there are six Indonesian Mennonite churches that belong to the

Christians face challenges everywhere

Chino Hills, Calif. (GCMC)—It's not easy to be a Christian in Indonesia, says Sutanto Adi, pastor of the Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Hosana. Christians often have to pay bribes in order to get building permits, among other things, he says.

Yet Adi thinks that Christians in the United States face a different kind of pressure due to the lack of moral standards. "The society is too loose. It is dangerous to raise your children here," he says.

Even his 7-year-old son, he says, absorbed the ethic of individual freedom within one year after his arrival in the United States in 1986. "I asked my son to turn off the television and his response was, This is a free country." *Carla Reimer*

The Jehovah's Witnesses have quit predicting the end of the world, according to the group's *Watchtower* magazine. Charles Russell, founder of the 5 million-member group, predicted the world would end in 1914; two more deadlines came and went in 1925 and 1975. (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

A survey of 1,000 black church members in five U.S. cities found that more than one-third believe AIDS was created in a germ warfare laboratory and has been used to commit genocide against black people. Another third said they were unsure about the theory, leaving only one-third who disagreed. The findings were reported by Sandra Crouse Quinn, a health educator at the University of North Carolina, at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association. (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

A study of 3,580 seminary students in Brazil, the nation considered by many to be the birthplace of liberation theology, has found the current crop of students far less political and more evangelical than their predecessors. The study was conducted by the Brazilian bishops' conference. According to the survey of seminarians, the number who say they want to work among the poor, homeless, migrants and others on society's periphery has dropped 50 percent over the past several years. According to the study, reported by the news agency of the Latin American and Caribbean churches, current seminarians considered liberation theology "to be something of the past." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

The world's most famous Canadian is Pamela Anderson of TV's *Baywatch*. *Maclean's* magazine reports that *Baywatch* is seen every week in nearly 150 countries by approximately 1 billion people, or one-fifth of the world's population. The 28-year-old native of Comox, B.C., is modest about her success. "I'm proud of having achieved this much, but it's not like I'm a tremendous actress or anything." (*World Press Review*)

• • •

Georgetown University, Washington, has announced plans to purchase $1 million in stock in a new bank designed to serve low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in the District of Columbia. The proposed Community First Bank of D.C. plans to work with local financial institutions to increase access to and responsible use of credit, and it plans to work with community organizations to produce affordable housing and to encourage entrepreneurship. Commercial, real-estate and consumer loans will be offered in areas of the city that have not had full access to the capital markets. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

The California-based Association of Vineyard Churches has removed the Toronto Airport Vineyard from the denomination, effective Jan. 20. The Toronto church is the home of the "Toronto Blessing," where worshipers from around the world claim to have experienced the Holy Spirit moving them to actions like uncontrollable laughter and making animal noises. The heart of the issue, reports *Christian Week*, is that "TAV's emphasis on manifestations and cross-denominational renewal events does not reflect the Vineyard mandate for ministry. Its prominence as the home of the world-renowned 'Toronto Blessing' also presents administrative difficulties for AVC, and threatens to reshape what it means to be Vineyard." (*Christian Week*)

Pacific Southwest Conference and one congregation in Vancouver.

A majority of the 15,000 Indonesians in the Los Angeles area have come here in search of a better life, says Adi.

"Many of them are first-generation immigrants. They often feel frustrated because they are used to having powerful jobs, a dentist, for example, who has to deliver newspapers to survive," he says.

Adi uses a cell-group approach to reach out to the new immigrants. Each cell group usually focuses on worship, prayer, testimonies, followed by a meal.

He remains convinced that "the best way to evangelize the world is by planting new churches. New believers need to be nurtured and discipled within the context of the local church." *Carla Reimer*

Pastor empowers immigrants

Pasadena, Calif. (GCMC)—Indonesian Virgo Handojo knows what it is like to arrive in a new country with few resources. When he immigrated to the United States in 1987, he only had $65 in his pocket.

Today, as pastor of Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Anugerah, a Mennonite congregation here, Handojo wants to help Indonesian immigrants become self-supporting by offering them funds. He started the church in September 1992.

"Most immigrants are overqualified for the kind of jobs that are available to them. They have to work hard to be able to earn between $600 and $800 per month," he says.

The congregation offers three different funding options: (1) loans offered at the prime rate, (2) loans without interest and (3) gifts of money. To date, close to $6,000 has been loaned or given away.

"Most Indonesians have an entrepreneurial spirit. They have come here to seek a better life," says Handojo.

One couple, he says, used the funds to buy a car, cutting down the hours it took to commute to work.

In addition to his pastoral work, Handojo is a full-time Ph.D. student at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena. He also sells computers.

"The challenge is how to empower immigrant people. I want them to understand the gospel message so they will live as salt and light in the broader community," he says. *Carla Reimer*

Carla Reimer

Entrepreneurial spirit: *Virgo and Jeanne Handojo and their children, Andrew and Andrea*

Record

Abbreviations

EMM YES—Eastern Mennonite Missions Youth Evangelism Service

MINISTERS

Dorothea Janzen will retire as associate pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., in January 1997.

Lee Lever will be pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., beginning July 1.

Roger Richer has resigned as pastor at Mountain Community Church, Palmer Lake, Colo., effective the end of May.

Royce Vogt has resigned as youth pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan. He will begin as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church, Harper, Kan., this summer.

WORKERS

Curtis T. Bechler has been named special assistant to the president at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., working in development.

Stephanie Epp, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., begins a four-month EMM YES term in Wales April 15.

Brian Myers, Pine Grove Church, Bowmansville, Pa., begins an eight-month EMM YES term in Romania April 15.

Lynette Schroeder, Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., begins an eight-month EMM YES term in Nigeria April 16.

Alvin Streicher, Riverdale Church, Millbank, Ont., begins a four-month EMM YES term in the Philippines April 14.

Bechler

Voran

Irma Voran, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., has resigned as secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church's Planned Giving Office as of May 1. She has worked at the GCMC offices for 24 years.

Director for Peace and Justice Resources

Half-time position is available after July 1 to develop and make available peace and justice resources to General Conference Mennonite congregations and area conferences.

For job description and application form, please contact **Lois Barrett, Commission on Home Ministries, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; or e-mail to loisb@gcmc.org**. Applications are due **by May 1**.

Goshen College announces a 1/2- to 3/4-time faculty opening in **acute-care nursing** beginning fall 1996. Doctoral preparation preferred. Master's degree in nursing required. Goshen College is an affirmative-action equal opportunity employer committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications will be received until position is filled. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Admissions counselor: 10-month, full-time position. Responsible for new student recruitment for **Eastern Mennonite University** primarily at Mennonite high schools, in areas of strong Mennonite concentrations and YES centers in certain geographical areas. Bachelor's degree required. Verbal and written communication skills required. Training in marketing/sales helpful. Willingness to travel regularly and be available for irregular evening and weekend hours. Application deadline: **April 5**. Multiethnic people and women are especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **EMU Human Resources Office, (540) 432-4108; or e-mail EbyBJ@EMU.Edu**.

Harvest help wanted: truck drivers and combine operators. Starting mid-May and ending late August or mid-September.

Call **Lance Martens at (316) 543-2851**.

The 51st annual **Eastern CPS reunion** will be held **Aug. 3-4, 1996**, at the Lancaster Mennonite High School, 2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, Pa. Open to all who served in CPS. Programs and registration forms will be sent to those on the mailing list.

If you want to be sure you are on the mailing list or want more information, contact **John B. Sauder, 1001 E. Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543; (717) 560-4256**.

DANCING AT THE TABLE
Re-Imagining the Church

An international gathering of Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations and individuals seeking a place of welcome for gay, lesbian and bisexual Christians.

June 28-30, 1996
N. Manchester, Indiana

Supportive Congregations
NETWORK

PO Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406
(612) 305-0315 SCNetwork@aol.com

Pillars of Faith

Godward
Personal Stories of Grace
Edited by **Ted Koontz**
A collection of personal stories by 24 Mennonite leaders who share their journeys in the hope of offering inspiration and encouragement to other pilgrims on the way.
Paper, 192 pages, $10.95; in Canada $15.75.

Words for Worship
Edited by **Arlene M. Mark**
This collection of responsive readings is a ready resource for pastors and leaders, to enrich and deepen worship together.
Comb binding, 240 pages, $15.95; in Canada $22.75.

Available through your local bookstore or by calling 1 800 759-4447.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com http://www.mph.lm.com/hp

Reviews

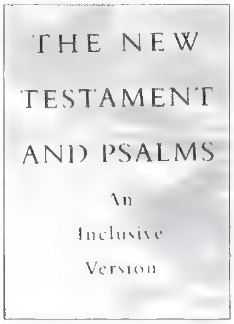
BOOKS

INCLUSIVE BIBLE

The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version, *edited by Victor Roland Gold, et al (Oxford University Press, 1995)*

Reviewed by John K. Sheriff, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Justifications for new versions of Scripture are that they attempt to reflect changes in the English language and the newest scholarship about source manuscripts and their meanings. While the editors of this new version cite both of these, their specific goal is to produce an inclusive version, a version that “reflects and attempts to anticipate developments in the English language with regard to specificity about a number of issues such as gender, race and physical disability.”


THE NEW TESTAMENT AND PSALMS

An Inclusive Version

This version will no doubt evoke much discussion about its felicity of style (or lack thereof), its accuracy of translation, and the motives of the editors. I want to speak only to the idea of an inclusive version.

If God is infinite spirit and not male or female, we should welcome a version that forces us to recognize that the metaphor for God as “Father” is just that, a metaphor, by rendering it “Father-Mother.” “Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be thy name” (Matthew 6:9). This is not a metaphor we can take literally but one that helps us see that God is like a father and a mother.

If we believe that all people are of equal value and that this is a central message of the Bible, we should welcome a version that adds the names of women (when they are known) to those of men when the genealogy of a people is discussed, as in Matthew 1:2-3. The use of “Child” instead of “Son” to refer to Jesus when he is not being spoken of in his role as a historical person but in an intimate relationship to God (e.g., Son of God, Son of Man) makes it easier for “children of God” of both sexes to identify with Jesus’ humanity. “For God so loved the world that God gave God’s only Child, so that everyone who believes in that Child may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). A female friend of mine wept when she became aware of the existence of this version of Scripture, feeling for the first time that it spoke directly to her.

If God loves red and yellow, black and white people equally, we should be glad for a version that is sensitive to the association of “dark” and “darkness” with dark-skinned people and that tries to alter the translation when the terms are used as negative metaphors. And surely it is consistent with the liberating message of the gospel to refuse to identify people by their physical disability, such as deaf, blind or lame, as if that were their most significant characteristic.

I find that this version not only awakens me to many passages to which I have become inured, as any new translation does, but it also makes me reconsider the content of my faith and keeps reminding me of the inclusive character of Christ’s love, which I seek to emulate. Therefore, I welcome the effort to present an inclusive version of the New Testament and Psalms that clarifies and highlights central biblical themes. This “inclusive version” has been and will be experienced by many as a catalyst of epiphany, a gift of love—and life.

PEACE TIPS

Peace Ministry: A Handbook for Local Churches *by Daniel L. Buttry (Judson Press, 1995, 224 pages)*

Reviewed by Susan Mark Landis, Orrville, Ohio

Whether you are beginning peace work in your local congregation or are a seasoned laborer, whether you are a pastor or a peace committee member, this book offers a wealth of ideas for keeping peace at the center of your congregation’s experience. Eighteen chapters guarantee most subjects are included, but none is explored in depth. Look here for ideas on worship, preaching, Christian education, peacemaking through the arts, small groups, the inward journey, church partnerships, travel, stewardship, nonviolent direct action, ministry to victims, local peacemaking, conflict in the congregation and “When the Nation Goes to War.”

GOING TO...

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

India 1997

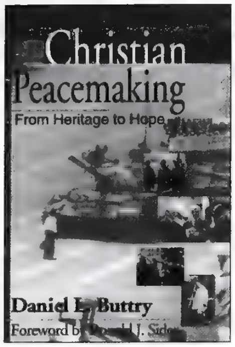
TourMagination offers two tours that include
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE:

Adventure to India .... Dec. 28, 1996 – Jan. 17, 1997
Adventure to India & Indonesia .... Jan. 1-23, 1997

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960



Extremely practical, with stories from Baptist peacemakers across the United States, *Peace Ministry* points out how to make peacemaking a normal activity of congregational life. Ideas are explained step by step, with addresses for resources given. As the Baptists take their Bible seriously, a biblical basis for these actions is always given.

Baptists are also known for their preaching, as I discovered when I was on the receiving end of their vigor at the Baptist Peacemakers Conference several years ago. Like our congregations, Baptist congregations are often not united in their belief in peacemaking. Buttry points out that "controversy is no excuse for silence, however," and that "effective preaching needs to stand on two legs: one planted on the Bible and the historical revelation of God through Jesus Christ, Israel and the early church; the other planted on the realities of life for the members of the local congregation."

Use this book either as a beginning point or a source of new ideas, but include it in your pastor's library and as a resource for your peace committee.

CRISIS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Abandoned Generation: Rethinking Higher Education *by William H. Willimon and Thomas H. Naylor (Eerdmans, 1995, 171 pages)*

Reviewed by Marion Deckert, North Newton, Kan.

Willimon and Naylor survey the symptoms of dysfunction in higher education, diagnose their causes and prescribe a cure. Primary among the symptoms of dysfunction are alcohol abuse, a campus culture that mitigates against serious and sustained intellectual engagement, and the view of education as a means to money, power and things. The basic causes of these symptoms are "(1) meaninglessness; (2) fragmentation of a student's life into unrelated, incoherent components; and (3) the absence of community."

This analysis of the signs and causes of crisis in higher education is not particularly new. The proposed cure is more innovative; it concentrates on changes in organization, teaching and curriculum.

The proposals on reorganization amount to a conviction that smaller, more tightly focused units are better. Proposed teaching reforms aim at greater emphasis on teaching, reducing student free time and increasing student-faculty interaction outside the classroom. The curriculum proposal would place stronger emphasis on general education and distribution while reducing emphasis on the major and specialization.

It is ironic that these authors, who are responsible for publishing no less than 63 books between them, want to reduce the emphasis on research and publication. College teachers who struggle to keep ahead of the demands of lectures and papers will find it doubly ironic that the authors propose to increase typical teaching loads from three to five courses per semester while increasing out-of-class interaction with students.

For those interested in a short introduction to the current debate over higher education, this is a reasonably good book. In many ways the authors affirm what has been typical of small church liberal arts colleges.

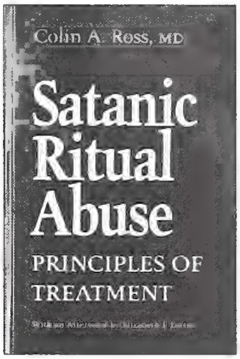
SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE

Satanic Ritual Abuse: Principles of Treatment *by Colin A. Ross, M.D. (University of Toronto Press, 1995, 228 pages)*

Reviewed by George Dyck, M.D., Newton, Kan.

Colin Ross is a Canadian psychiatrist and expert in the field of dissociative identity disorders who did much of his research in Winnipeg and is now in Dallas, Texas. From his vantage point of years of work with multiple personality disorders (MPD), recently renamed dissociative identity disorders, he addresses the management of victims of satanic ritual abuse (SRA) from a clinical standpoint for the mental health professional, but also devotes considerable space to putting it in a sociological perspective, which will be of interest to the general reader.

The extent of SRA has become a divisive issue for professionals in the field, as researchers point out the sparseness of objective evidence of its occurrence, while some practitioners have been accused of creating a "psychotherapy cult" for the purpose of exploiting troubled people from whom they recover false memories of abuse. Ross attempts to stake out a rational middle ground that seeks to build upon objective research findings. While he admits that as little as one-tenth of the reported memories of such people may be historical fact, he reviews the long history of satanic cults engaging in ritual mutilation and killing, and says we cannot simply dismiss their existence entirely on the grounds that few bodies are found.



In his section on the treatment of people with MPD and SRA, Ross advocates holding patients responsible for their behavior, even when repression appears to make them unaware of what they have done. While he emphasizes that there are not separate people in one body, he does say individual identities should be dealt with separately to engage them. Other practitioners in the field take the position of never addressing an alter separately because this legitimates and reinforces the separation.

Colin Ross may offend some readers by his psychological interpretation of Satan as a force created by human beings, but he deals with the subject of SRA in a very informative manner. He notes that the reaction against Satanism historically has been much more destructive than the Satanism itself, as exemplified by the horrors of the Roman Catholic Inquisition in Spain.

Does everyone in your
church receive
The Mennonite?
We have special rates for
group subscriptions.
Call our orderline at
1-800-757-5101.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 497 RR
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Better business through celebration

As a denomination, we need a better way of doing business. Blame part of my feelings on my aching body after four days of sitting in meetings at the annual Council of Commissions of the General Conference Mennonite Church. But I'm speaking for others as well when I say that we do too much talking and not enough celebrating.

At one of the plenary sessions of these recent meetings (March 8-12), one person suggested that we need to do more celebrating, and I heard others resonate with his view.

A highlight for those attending the meetings of the Commission on Overseas Mission was Sunday night, when candidates for new mission assignments overseas gave their testimonies.

Many wonder how we might include more nonwhite Mennonites in our decision-making bodies. There are likely several reasons for there not being more minorities represented at these annual meetings of the leaders of our church. But one, a person told me, is that many of these people don't want to come and spend four days sitting around tables talking. They would rather hear testimonies and sing and pray together.

> ***Let's do the business we need to do, but let's make celebration a priority, an annual, a weekly, a daily practice that helps us remain aware of Christ's presence among us.***

It's not that the Council of Commissions doesn't take time to celebrate. This year we had a special dinner honoring Vern Preheim for his 16 years of faithful service as general secretary. It was a rich time of sharing that included much laughter. We also had times of worship. But the majority of the time was for business.

We must do business, of course. There are many decisions to be made. But are there better ways of doing it? The complaints seem to come every year, but in the 18 Councils of Commissions I've attended, I've seen little change.

Together in silence: My own congregation did something different a few months ago. The church council, which includes seven people, had been meeting and having difficulty coming to a consensus about a future direction for the church. One evening, with the help of Western District Conference minister Marvin Zehr, they met but did not discuss business at all. Instead they sat together in silence and waited for each other in turn to read a Scripture passage or choose a song or lead in a prayer. Each person said this united them in a way they had not experienced before.

I've been to enough Mennonite meetings to know that Mennonites tend to spend long hours in business. They like to get a lot done. But Mennonites also know how to celebrate, especially if food and song are involved.

For the early church, Christ's resurrection was the focus of its celebration. This happened especially in the spring, at Easter, but it also happened each week as believers broke bread, had Communion, re-enacted Christ's death and resurrection.

We have lost that regular sense of celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and the promise of new life. That new life is present now in our daily walk, with the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are also promised, as Dan Epp-Tiessen writes about on page 3, a new body. Our faith is not real unless it is incarnated. God acts through flesh and blood. The resurrection is one powerful sign of that.

Let's do the business we need to do, but let's make celebration a priority, an annual, a weekly, a daily practice that helps us remain aware of Christ's presence among us.
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 07
APRIL 9, 1996

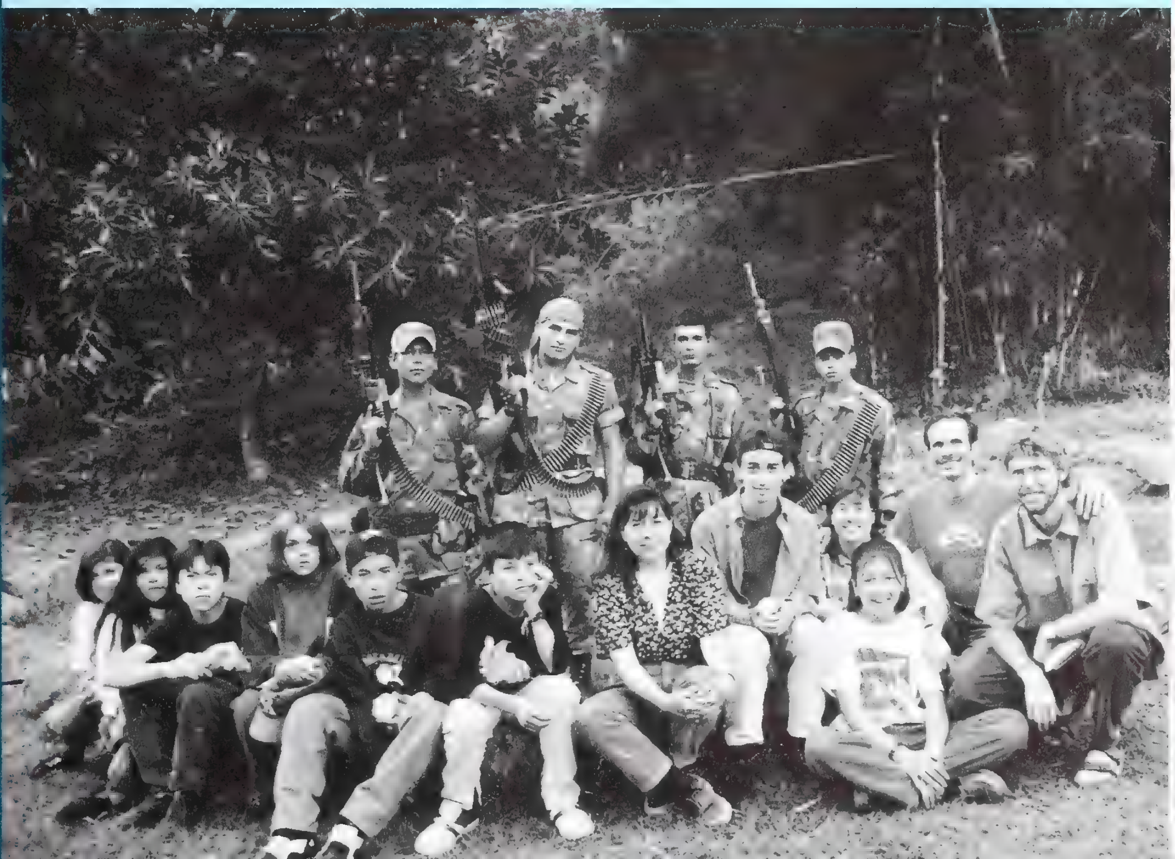
APR 15 '96

Inside

- Adoption pains are preventable / p. 9
- The long shadow of the centurion / p. 10
- The basics of mutual funds / p. 11

The spirituality of peace

Soldiers visit a Mennonite youth retreat in Colombia



- The destructive reach of war (page 3)
- Godiva's watch (page 5)
- The example of Jesus' hands (page 6)

Prologue

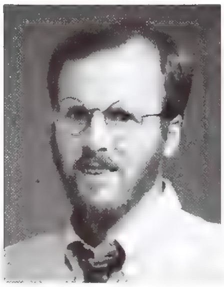
This is Larry Penner's last issue as assistant editor of *The Mennonite*. He has been a valuable member of our staff and has brought many gifts to his work. Besides being an excellent writer and editor, Larry is also a talented musician. It has been a joy to work with him. We wish him all the best as he moves to Lancaster, Pa. We also hope to see his byline in this magazine in the future.

The cover photo may jar you, but this is part of our mission outreach at work. Frank Soto Albrecht sent us excerpts from his journal plus some photos about a youth convention in Colombia that he attended (page 3). They had unexpected visitors when a number of Colombian soldiers showed up. Frank, a mission worker for the Commission on Overseas Mission, engaged them in conversation.

The poem on page 5 does an interesting take on the lady of legend.

Laura Sportack uses the image of Jesus' hands in presenting a biblical spirituality of peace (page 6).

Ruth Mark, a social worker who helps people with adoptions, offers some tips on preventing painful experiences (page 9).



John Stoner (page 10) looks at the story of the centurion that Jesus praised.

J.B. Miller offers some basic information about mutual funds (page 11).

And read in our news section about the annual Council of Commissions. *gh*

Next issue: Mission work in Toronto

Cover: Photo supplied by Commission on Overseas Mission

Contents

FEATURES

3 The destructive reach of war

A church retreat in Colombia encounters armed soldiers.

5 Godiva's watch

A poem calling for peace

6 The example of Jesus' hands

A biblical spirituality of peace

DEPARTMENTS

8 Letters
9 Speaking out
10 Bible
11 Fiscal health
13 News
21 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Larry Penner
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www:southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

A church retreat in Colombia encounters armed soldiers.

The following article is adapted from Frank Soto Albrecht's journal for Jan. 19. He and Elizabeth, his wife, work with youth at the Central Mennonite Church in Berna, Colombia. They attended the annual youth convention in Cachipay, which was held at a recreation center on a farm that is owned by the Colombia Mennonite Church.

Frank Soto Albrecht

The destructive reach of war

As we were about ready to leave and return home, a group of 15 armed soldiers arrived at the camp. They told us they heard there were four guerrillas in the area, but I think they really were just bored and wanted to visit us. We offered them soda, then entered into conversations with them. We learned that their commanding officer played guitar, and for over an hour we listened to him play and sing songs he had composed.

His songs were moving. They spoke of Jesus Christ and the church. They talked of his life as a soldier, how difficult it is, and how his only wish is to one day return to his mother. He had love songs for former girlfriends, and the list goes on. I was so touched. What a paradox. After having just spent a whole convention talking about peace and nonresistance, we spent our last two hours with men holding weapons that take life in a flash.

As we walked back to the little pueblo of Cachipay, the soldiers wanted to accompany us. The largest young man of the group, Juan Carlos, was carrying a gun larger than the other men's, with large bullets slung all over his body. He talked with Richard, one of our youth. One statement he made was especially impressive. He told Richard that he does like women, but the thing that brings him most satisfaction is killing people. When he gets a chance, he said, he fills a person with 15 bullets. I was so sad when I heard this.

Alcoholic: Listening to Juan Carlos helps me understand William. William is a young father who started attending our church about four months ago with his wife and four daughters. They appeared to be a poor family, but I never knew the extent of their poverty until yesterday. I went to visit them yesterday, because Sunday William's wife, Fidela, called me aside after the church service to tell me that William was an alcoholic and that he beats her and the four girls. I was so sad and felt hopeless. I made an appointment to go to their house the next day to talk with both of them.

continued on next page

After having just spent a whole convention talking about peace and nonresistance, we spent our last two hours with men holding weapons that take life in a flash.

When William was in the army, he was in a platoon fighting guerrillas in the mountains, and 17 of the 20 men he was with were killed in a massacre. He survived, but when he is drunk, he cries and brings up these memories.

COM photo

Peace and weapons: *The author (second from right) and fellow mission worker Bryan Moyer Suderman (right) with the Mennonite youth group and four of the Colombian soldiers who visited their camp, including Juan Carlos, the second soldier from the left*

It took me two hours to find their house, a wooden/cardboard shack in the mountains of Bogota. William was not there, because I was 2 1/2 hours late. I think God planned it that way, because Fidela really needed to talk with someone. She is planning to go to a social service agency and try to get help. She is trying to buy the little plot of land where they have built their house, but with four children at home and William controlling most of her life, it is very hard. William does not hold a job and when he does find work, he gives little money to Fidela. She has paid $550 on a $1,500 mortgage, but it looks like she will lose the land because she is behind on her payments.

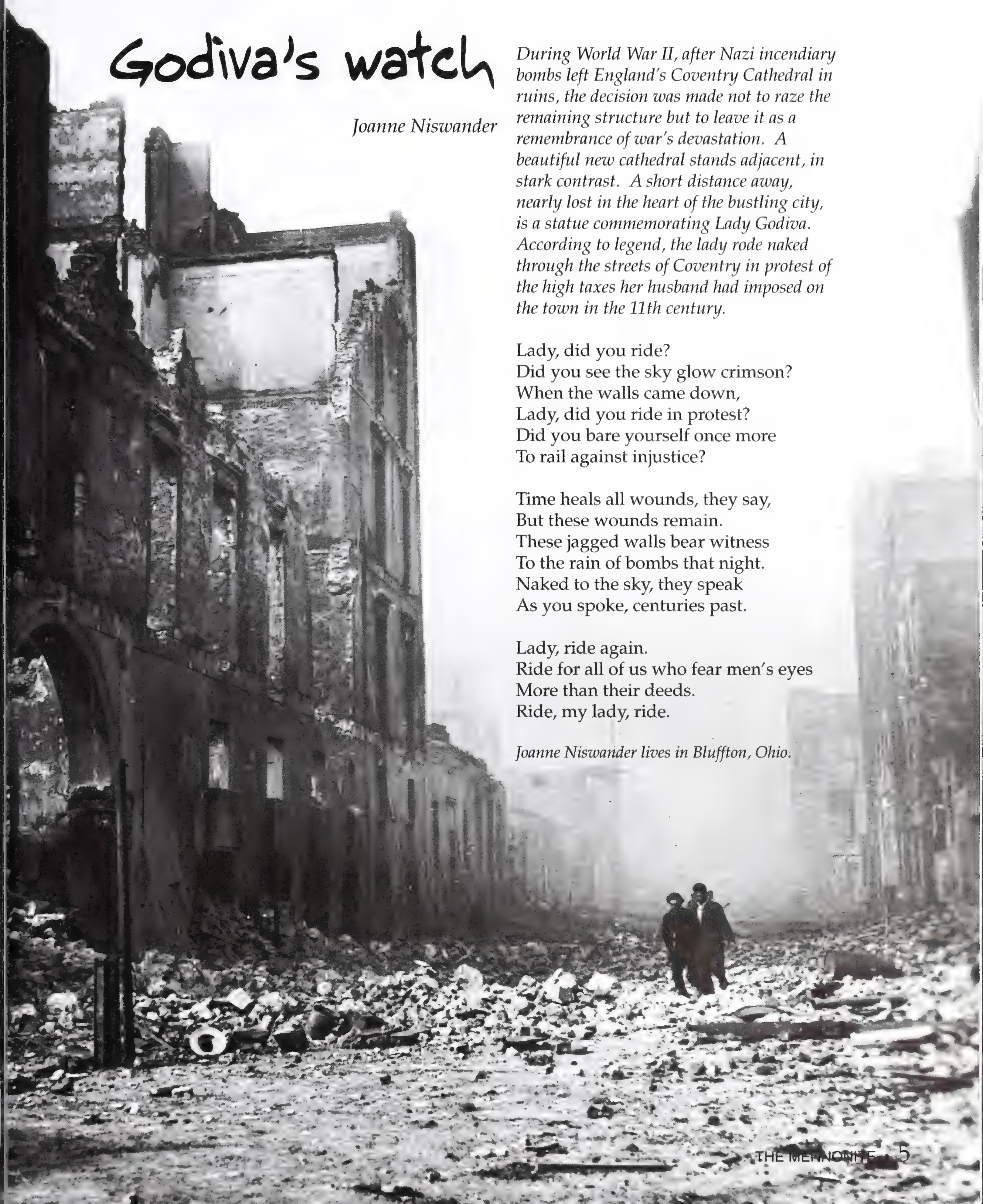
I love Fidela and William. I am also angry with William. He represents so many macho men. But when I look at William's family background and experiences, I understand why he is like he is. Fidela told me that when William was in the army, he was in a platoon fighting guerrillas in the mountains, and 17 of the 20 men he was with were killed in a massacre. He survived, but when he is drunk, he cries and brings up these memories. War damages the very center of those who are involved. It makes me so sad. Also, all the men in William's family started drinking when they were children, and all have problems with alcohol now.

The spirituality of peace

Frank Soto Albrecht works in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Godiva's watch

Joanne Niswander



During World War II, after Nazi incendiary bombs left England's Coventry Cathedral in ruins, the decision was made not to raze the remaining structure but to leave it as a remembrance of war's devastation. A beautiful new cathedral stands adjacent, in stark contrast. A short distance away, nearly lost in the heart of the bustling city, is a statue commemorating Lady Godiva. According to legend, the lady rode naked through the streets of Coventry in protest of the high taxes her husband had imposed on the town in the 11th century.

Lady, did you ride?
Did you see the sky glow crimson?
When the walls came down,
Lady, did you ride in protest?
Did you bare yourself once more
To rail against injustice?

Time heals all wounds, they say,
But these wounds remain.
These jagged walls bear witness
To the rain of bombs that night.
Naked to the sky, they speak
As you spoke, centuries past.

Lady, ride again.
Ride for all of us who fear men's eyes
More than their deeds.
Ride, my lady, ride.

Joanne Niswander lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

A biblical spirituality of peace

The example of Jesus'

Laura Sportack

A biblical spirituality of peace must have Christ as its center. We begin not with ideologies, humanitarian goals or even love. Christ is our starting point.

To have Christ in the center means that before all else we listen to God's Spirit. We listen through becoming a biblically literate people familiar with the words given us in Scripture. A corporate familiarity with Scripture provides a context for discussions in which all participants in the discussion know the same language.

The primary expression of that language is prayer. In a biblical spirituality of peace, the spirit we pay most attention to is God's Spirit, not our spirits or the spirit of the times in which we live.

In the work of peacemaking we join those who asked Jesus, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" (John 6:28). We want to do our part of this vitally important work. We look to the Bible, to our church traditions and the historical accounts of God's people for direction and specific instruction.

We want to "get our hands dirty" as we enter the heart of God's work. After all, God's hands created us from the dust of the ground. Jesus' hands touched the disease-ridden body of the leper. Jesus' hands firmly grasped the tables he overturned in the temple. And in the final work, Jesus' hands received his own blood as he fulfilled God's will on the cross. When we choose to follow Jesus we rightly ask what we must do to enter into the work of God.

Jesus' answer is unexpected. He gently replaces our plural "works" with his singular "work" and says, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (John 6:29).

The image of God's hands, creating us from the dust of the ground, invites us to say, "Yes, I believe in a Creator who made all things good." We sing of beauty and quote the psalms that speak of God's creative majesty.

Love and hope become realities only as we enter the suffering and brokenness we encounter, expecting that God has entered before us.

But eventually we look at creation and have to face a fragile and damaged environment and disasters engineered by natural forces we cannot in honesty call "good."

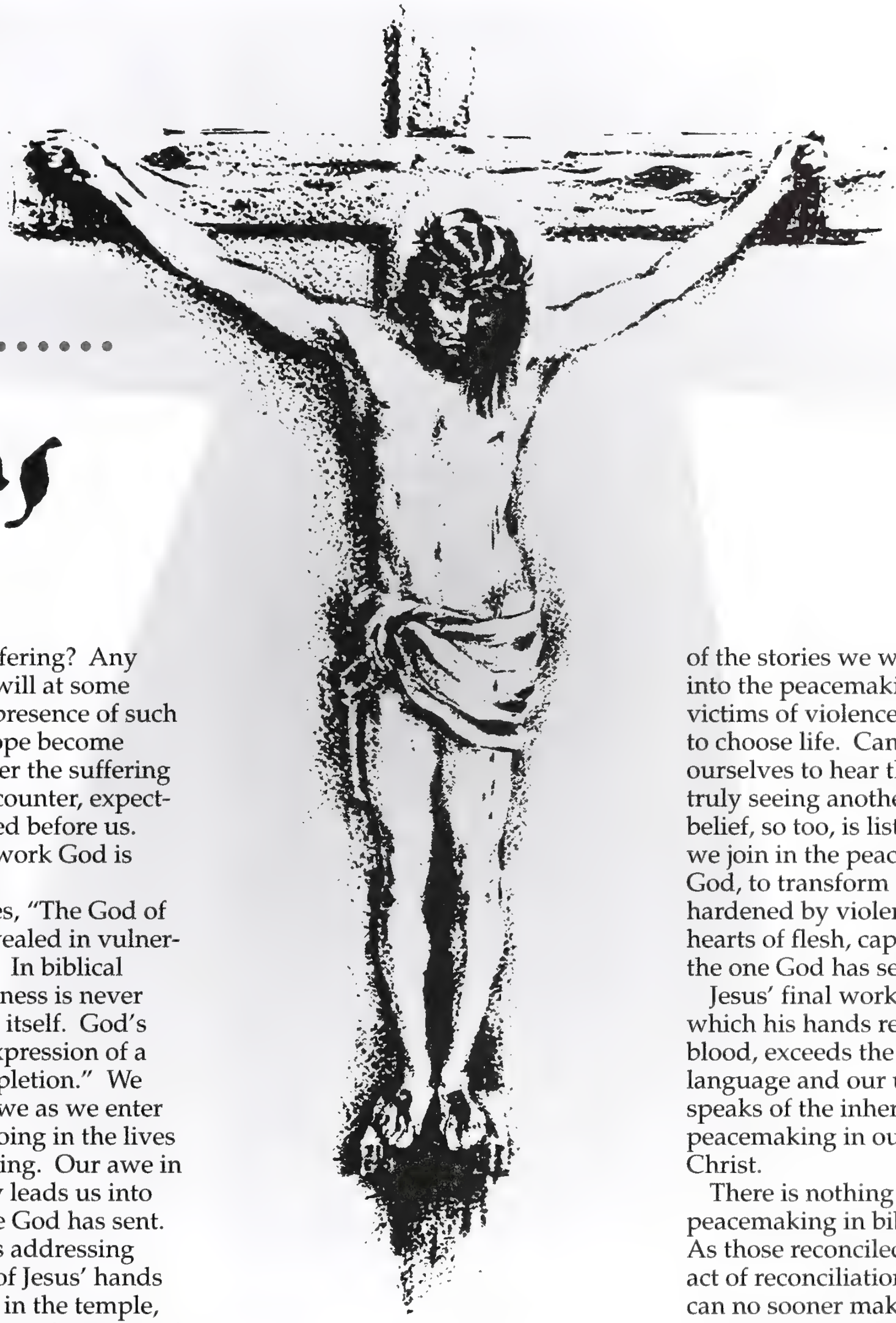
The face of Christ: Perhaps our most vulnerable moment comes when we look at each other. What do we see when we view the human race, this culmination of God's creativity? This question can lead to cynicism. How can we see beyond the evil and pain to the good? We are creatures made in God's image. We can best honor this likeness by stopping and looking at one another prayerfully. In that looking we will see the face of Christ and so participate in the work of God: to believe in the one God has sent.

As we read the stories of Jesus' hands touching the leper, we say, "Yes, I believe in a healing God who will make all things well." We retell the stories to encourage those with suffering friends, children, parents. But eventually, as we are called to touch the reality of minds and bodies broken by seemingly irrational, random afflictions, we become vulnerable and cry out, "Where is God in all this?"

Flannery O'Conner, who died at age 39 after a long and painful illness, wrote, "Sickness before death is a very appropriate thing, and I think those who don't have it miss one of God's mercies."

What is our response to this unique

hands



insight into human suffering? Any work in peacemaking will at some time bring us into the presence of such suffering. Love and hope become realities only as we enter the suffering and brokenness we encounter, expecting that God has entered before us. We join in the healing work God is already doing.

Beldon C. Lane writes, "The God of Scripture is equally revealed in vulnerability and in triumph. In biblical faith, therefore, brokenness is never celebrated as an end in itself. God's brokenness is but an expression of a love on its way to completion." We experience profound awe as we enter into the work God is doing in the lives of those who are suffering. Our awe in the face of this mystery leads us into deeper belief in the one God has sent.

Peacemaking implies addressing violence. As we read of Jesus' hands turning over the tables in the temple, we affirm our belief in a righteous God who loves justice. We rejoice at the cease-fires that interrupt our wars, and we celebrate when nations agree to disarm. Finally we are called to disarm ourselves as we listen to stories told by victims of violence that have occurred within our own families and church communities. Can we take off the protective cloak of a tradition that has often blamed victims? Can we acknowledge our participation in perpetrating a violent, destructive culture whose highest goal is power and control?

Hearts of flesh: Shedding that cloak leaves us vulnerable to the pain of the stories we will hear as we enter into the peacemaking work of offering victims of violence new opportunities to choose life. Can we risk disarming ourselves to hear these stories? Just as truly seeing another person is an act of belief, so too, is listening. In listening we join in the peacemaking work of God, to transform hearts of stone, hardened by violence and abuse, into hearts of flesh, capable of believing in the one God has sent.

As those reconciled to God through an act of reconciliation by God's Son, we can no sooner make peace optional in our spirituality than we can make the crucifixion optional in our theology.

Jesus' final work of reconciliation, in which his hands received his own blood, exceeds the capacity of our language and our understanding. It speaks of the inherent integration of peacemaking in our lives as we follow Christ.

There is nothing optional about peacemaking in biblical spirituality. As those reconciled to God through an act of reconciliation by God's Son, we can no sooner make peace optional in our spirituality than we can make the crucifixion optional in our theology.

The forms of our peacemaking will vary greatly. Therefore Jesus' answer identifies not a method but rather the one gift we all need to receive in order to do the work of God—faith—a continuing, developing, growing and living belief. Out of this faith will come the callings to see, touch, listen, do and be those who are named peacemakers.

Laura Sportack is an artist and worship leader at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C. This article is reprinted from MCC Peace Office Newsletter, July-August 1993.

Letters

HONEST MENNONITE REALITY

I hope *The Mennonite* remains a forum where differing views are able to be expressed. I look at other church publications with their color glossy photos of idealized realities, obviously aimed at impressing outsiders/potential converts. *The Mennonite* is brave enough to publish information on our controversies, shortcomings and self-doubts, as well as stories of strength, victories and consensus. Mennonite reality may not always conform to our ideals, but we can at least be honest about it. *Mary Whitsett, Pablo, Mont.*

AN INSPIRING INSTRUCTOR

I was happy to read Erland Waltner's article in *The Mennonite* (Feb. 27 issue, page 6). He was one of my professors when I attended Bethel College in the 1950s.

Transferring from Philadelphia Bible College and the East Coast environment to a small-town college in the Midwest was almost a cultural shock. But Erland Waltner was a helpful bridge for me in this journey. He was a most dedicated, inspiring instructor and a very respected professor on campus.

"Basic Christian Conviction" was a required course [at Bethel]. I heard many comments from students who, required to take the course against their wishes, found that they enjoyed it under Dr. Waltner.

Erland Waltner has served the church with all his being all his life, and I salute and thank him for this. *Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

WHOLE-LIFE CONSECRATION

Regarding Jake Nickel's letter (March 12 issue, page 9) about no more academic papers on stewardship: If I understood him correctly, he said we need to move instead toward better communication between those who give and the mission organizations that receive, and that we should expend the money and energy to do it right. He also pointed to the need "to rekindle our amazement ... of what God has done for us in and through the person of Jesus, whom we call Lord and Savior."

As director of The Giving Project, the stewardship initiative Nickel was writing about, I wish to give two responses:

1. Nickel's concerns are right on.
2. The Giving Project is specifically focused on rekindling our amazement of Jesus, leading believers to whole-life consecration, including our incomes.

I think Nickel, and others who share his concerns, will be pleasantly surprised. *Mark Vincent, Elkhart, Ind.*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

We arrived in Zaporozhye in the middle of one of the worst winters that Ukraine has had since the 1940s. The temperature in the apartments varies according to the distance from the central heating system. We won't deny that we have been colder this winter than we have been for some time. But we feel sorry for all the vendors, especially for the old grandmothers, who stand in the snow in minus-20 weather, trying to earn a livelihood.

By North American standards most people here are poor. Ukraine is in the midst of a serious economic depression. Many are unemployed, some employed only part-time, while others are employed by companies who cannot pay salaries. Inflation has skyrocketed.

A shipment of Mennonite Central Committee clothes and blankets arrived in the afternoon of our first day in "Zap." Some of this material was also designated for the Mennonites in the city and the surrounding villages. The people have been grateful for these gifts.

For the last two years a group of people (30 to 40) from various backgrounds, but mostly Mennonite, have been meeting together on Sunday morning. This service is conducted in the German language and translated into Russian. All of these people or some of their relatives have experienced exile or imprisonment. All can tell stories of fear, hardship and sorrow. Many can tell stories of torture and murder. But others tell stories of faith. Many want to form a fellowship of believers that reads and studies the Bible together. All have a Bible, but not all are equally knowledgeable about its message. Some have said they want to be baptized; others are not sure of its meaning.

Sue and I have been sent here by the Commission on Overseas Mission in response to a call from a small, fledgling fellowship. We have been asked to explore with this group the nature of COM's future involvement, not only in Zaporozhye but also in the surrounding area. We ask for your prayers that we may be sensitive to the needs of the people we have come to serve and as we assess the needs for COM's future involvement. *Peter Kehler*

In late January, after we were held in an armed robbery in our house, we were physically and emotionally spent. [See the news clip on page 13 of our Feb. 27 issue.] Arriving at our safe house, we decided to join the group meeting upstairs. They prayed with us and for us. While in prayer one of the men said, "I feel the Lord telling me we should go to the [Mennonite Central Committee] house and bind the devil and his evil workers." Twelve of us piled into vehicles at 10:15 p.m. and drove across town to Mohalalitoe [MCC quarters]. We formed a prayer circle and offered many prayers and pleas, binding Satan and asking for God's presence in a special way in Mohalalitoe.

Since then we have had other break-ins. Now the thieves are down to eating and stealing toilet tissue and such things. All that has been stolen will only be realized when we try to get back to work and live there once more.

Currently there are renovations going on and security measures being installed. This could take at least a month. (We hope not longer.) Not having a place to call your own away from family and friends in a strange, violent country is difficult. *Bill and Betty Enns, Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission workers in Lesotho, Southern Africa*

Speaking out

Adoption pains are preventable

Proper handling of the Baby Jessica case could have prevented a tragedy.

Ruth A. Mark

Remember Baby Jessica? Three years ago she was in the news when her birth parents gained custody of her, and she had to leave her adoptive parents. Such trauma could have been prevented.

The adoptive couple, Mr. and Mrs. DeBoer, were not able to adopt a child through private adoption (attorney- and/or physician-assisted adoption) since it is unlawful in their home state of Michigan.

Therefore, they arranged a private adoption through an attorney in Iowa, after they found an unmarried birth mother, Cara Clausen. After Jessica was born on Feb. 8, 1991, Cara signed the adoption papers, and on Feb. 25, 1991, the DeBoers took Jessica to their home in Michigan.

Cara was not a well-counseled birth parent. Good counseling from an adoption counselor would have helped her begin to work through her loss while she was still pregnant and would have helped her understand and anticipate the feelings of ambivalence and loss that she would experience after the placement of the child.

This same counselor should have been available to her for emotional support whenever she needed it after the placement. Cara also would have understood that for the emotional well-being of her baby, the adoption decision needed to be final at that time so her baby could begin life with stability and permanency.

Since she did not have the support of an adoption counselor, she sought help to cope with her loss through Concerned United Birthparents, a group that several years ago believed that "adoption should be the last choice." Now they believe, "Adoption as we know it should be eliminated."

They urged Cara to fight the adoption, perhaps more to further their political cause than because of their concern for Cara's and Jessica's well-being.

Another important fact is that Cara lied about the identity of the birth father. Therefore, the wrong man signed the legal adoption documents. This could have been prevented by requiring on the document that Cara swear and/or affirm that "all statements included in this document are true and correct and specifically that I am designating the true and correct birth father of my child."

This was not done, so she was able to return two weeks later and say, "I lied, Mr. Schmidt is the birth father."

RNS

Emotional needs: Adoption can be a good experience for birth parents, adoptive parents and their children if the emotional needs of birth parents are met by adoption professionals who understand those needs and know how to meet them.

Birth parents making adoption plans out of love and concern for their child's well-being deserve no less than this. Their children deserve early bonding in an excellent adoptive home where there is no fear of disruption.

Adoption is an intense, emotional experience because it involves love and concern for the entire future life of a precious human being. Planning for the emotionally healthy life of the child and assisting the birth families with all of their differing emotions throughout pregnancy, delivery, hospital stay, signing of the adoption papers, leaving the hospital without the child, working through the emotions of the placement and being assisted in their return to emotional health is the expertise that good adoption agencies possess.

The other equally important part of their task is infertility grief-work with prospective adoptive couples, followed by education, evaluation, approval for placement and working with the family after placement. Adoption is a specialized area of social services requiring skill and training. It is not merely a legal transaction.

Why, then, do birth parents and prospective adoptive couples sometimes go to an attorney or physician for this complex, emotional social service? Perhaps they do not understand what their needs will be and how those needs can best be met. And many emotional needs are not being met by attorney/physician placement.

> ***Adoption is an intense, emotional experience because it involves love and concern for the entire future life of a precious human being.***

Our children need the benefits that a two-parent home can give. Birth parents can place their child for adoption and go on to live happy, fulfilled lives. Placing a child for adoption may be one of the greatest acts of unselfish love that a person may do throughout a lifetime.

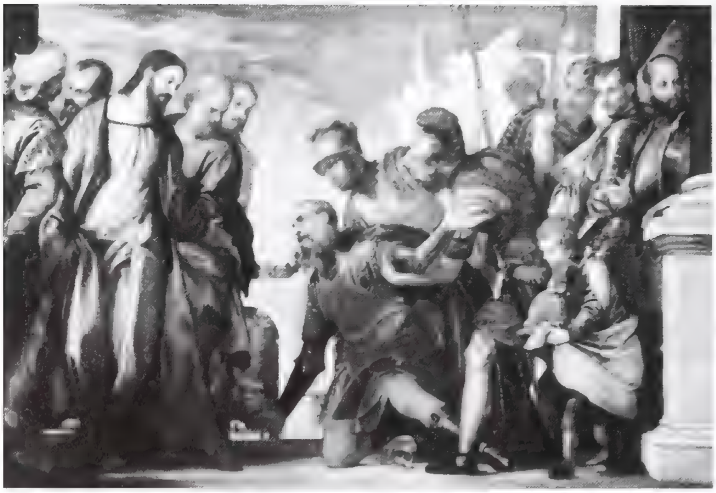
Ruth A. Mark is a social worker and a member of Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

The long shadow of the centurion

Did Jesus bless military service?

John K. Stoner



Astonishing grace: *"Christ and the Centurion" by Paolo Cagliari*

Nelson Gallery-Akins Museum, Kansas City, Mo. (Nelson Fund)

Who was the centurion? It is easier to say who he has become, in Christian (and increasingly in "peace church" Christian) circles. The centurion has become the human model through whom Jesus Christ is made compatible with violence, the military profession and the ubiquitous, deadly and unnecessary institution of war.

This is no small load for one man in history to carry. The nameless centurion has risen to mythic proportions. Let's examine the myth more closely.

When someone asks whether Jesus, or his followers, may be engaged in war or some aspect of the vast superstructure that undergirds the institution of war (military service or civilian support of military structures), the discussion seldom goes far before Jesus' response to the Roman centurion is appealed to as proof that Jesus did not condemn intergroup lethal conflict.

The account of the centurion in Matthew 8 reports that a centurion in Capernaum appealed to Jesus to come and heal his servant. Jesus responded that he would come. The centurion immediately protested that he was unworthy for Jesus to come under his roof and that Jesus could just speak the word and the servant would be healed. "I understand how authority works," the centurion said. "I speak a word and men obey my command. You can do the same. No need to come to my house."

Jesus was amazed at the man's faith and exclaimed, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from the east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Then Jesus turned to the centurion and said, "Go, let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour. End of story.

There is no report that Jesus rebuked the centurion for his soldiering profession. This is taken as strong evidence, if not absolute proof, that Jesus approved of soldiering, justified war and was not a pacifist.

At least two things are lacking in this use of the story. First, it reflects a total disregard for the most elementary sensitivity to the cultural, religious and political realities of the situation. Who was a centurion to a Jew in first-century Palestine? Everything in the story hangs on the cultural implications of the encounter between Jesus and the centurion.

A hated enemy soldier: The centurion was the feared and hated representative of the Roman occupation forces in Palestine. Some 30 years earlier, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, at nearby Sepphoris, Roman forces led by centurions had crucified 2,000 Jews along the roadway in retaliation for a Jewish uprising against the Roman occupation of their country. Such deeds are not forgotten in 30 years. Jews had no admiration for the spiffy military uniforms of Roman centurions. They certainly did not see centurions as the guardians of democracy and the freedom to worship God as they pleased, unmolested in their comfortable morning sanctuaries. The centurion was a hated enemy soldier. He was not one of ours but one of theirs.

Second, the militarist interpretation of this story ignores the main point of the story, which is the astonishing discovery of faith in a character as foreign and repulsive as a centurion. Matthew accents this by reporting Jesus' shocking announcement that all sorts of people from east and west will enter God's reign while the insiders, the church-going, presumed heirs will be shut out altogether. Luke dramatizes this alien faith by reporting that the centurion sends Jewish elders to request healing for his son. The Jewish heirs come and begin to make an appeal for the healing based on the worthiness of the centurion. Then the centurion sends friends to Jesus, saying that he feels unworthy that Jesus should come under his roof. The play on worthy/unworthy sets the stage for Jesus' words: "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."

So Jesus' encounter with the centurion is another story of astonishing grace. God is gracious even to enemy soldiers. Jesus reaches out to Caesar's centurions, Hitler's storm troopers, Stalin's SS men, Saddam's royal guard, IDF forces in the occupied West Bank, Arafat's bodyguard, U.S. Marines. Jesus did not condemn the centurion but set him on the path of redemption. That is what Jesus does for sinners, for transgressors, for enemies, for all. Jesus did not condemn the woman taken in adultery. But he did not thereby put his stamp of approval for all time on adultery. He set the woman on the path of redemption and a new life.

The only thing we can learn about Jesus' attitude toward violence and war from his encounter with the centurion is a surprising example of how to think about enemy soldiers.

John Stoner is the coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking, Akron, Pa.

Fiscal health

● ● ● ▼

The basics of mutual funds

It's better to understand how they work before you invest in them.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

More often than I like, I get a phone call that makes me nervous. The call begins with a request for information about mutual funds. Since we offer MMA Praxis Mutual Funds, I am eager to oblige. However, the caller often asks, "What are you paying on your mutual funds?" This shows little awareness of how mutual funds operate.

In simple terms, mutual funds are just big piles of money gathered from thousands (in some cases, millions) of people called shareholders. This money is then invested in various places. If the investments go up in value, they create what is called a capital gain, which is then reflected in the value to the shareholder.

For example, 100 people get together on Jan. 1, 1995, and each puts $1,000 into an account totaling $100,000. They now take this money and buy 2,000 shares of XYZ Corporation at $50 per share. If the shares of XYZ are worth $60 per share on Dec. 31, 1995, then each shareholder's investment of $1,000 is now worth $1,200, and they have an annual return of 20 percent.

If, however, the stock as of Dec. 31, 1995, was $40, then each of the $1,000 investments is worth only $800, and the investors have a 20 percent loss. If the investors choose to sell at this time, they will get back only $800.

Virtually every type of mutual fund operates this way. You, as an investor, risk the loss of some or all your principal when you invest in a mutual fund. The only exceptions, generally speaking, are money market accounts, which attempt to invest in securities that do not have much risk. Thus if you invest $1,000 in a money market mutual fund, you should get back the $1,000 plus whatever interest you may have earned.

Mutual funds do not operate like a bank certificate of deposit (CD), where you put in $10,000 and at the end of the term you get the principal back plus any earned interest, with the interest rate stated up front. So if you are certain you do not want to risk the loss of any principal, mutual funds may not be your best option.

None of this is meant to scare you away from mutual funds. For many people, mutual funds are an appropriate investment because of the variety of funds available and because of the possibility of better returns than traditional bank CDs.

Record high: Mutual funds are popular at the moment. Last year investments in U.S. stock mutual funds hit a record high—over $117 billion. Funds continued to flow into stock mutual funds in 1996 at a fast pace—$28.9 billion in January alone. Approximately $4 billion was invested in stock mutual funds in Canada in 1995, down from $5.3 billion in 1994.

> ***Most financial planners encourage investments in some kind of mutual fund based on the objectives of the investor.***

The current popularity of mutual funds is no doubt tied to the fact that returns last year were good for investors owning U.S. stocks. The Standard & Poor's 500 return was 37.51 percent, while the Toronto Stock Exchange 300 was 14.53 percent, counting dividends. Over the last five years, 1993 was the best for Canadian stocks, when the TSE 300 total return was 32.55 percent. Some mutual funds did better than these rates, and some did not.

Mutual funds are often categorized according to the types of investments they are allowed to make. Broad categories include stock funds and bond funds. These are further segmented into 20 or more types, such as growth funds or emerging market funds. Each category has a different level of risk. You should read the prospectus to understand the type of investments that a mutual fund is permitted to make. While this may seem technical in nature, parts of it will be helpful for you as you decide how much of your savings you wish to risk.

How do you pick a good mutual fund? If you are an inexperienced investor you should work with someone called a registered representative. This must be someone who is licensed to sell mutual funds and, ideally, someone you know and trust. In most cases you will be charged a commission for this service, but it is well worth the fee, since the registered representative can help you assess how comfortable you are with the level of risk associated with a particular mutual fund. The registered representative can also help you understand how the funds have performed historically. This information is usually available for periods of one, three and five years, as well as from the inception of the fund.

Virtually every advertisement of mutual funds ends something like this: "Past performance is not an indication of future results." That is correct. A fund that had a return of 30 percent one year may experience a 10 percent loss the next year.

None of this is meant to frighten you away from investing in mutual funds. Most financial planners encourage investments in some kind of mutual fund based on the objectives of the investor. Over the long term, most mutual funds have outperformed traditional investments such as bank CDs. The critical factor is to understand how mutual funds work so that you will not be surprised if at a particular time your investment is not worth as much as it once was.

As with any investment, be sure you have all your questions answered satisfactorily before investing in mutual funds. The one question that cannot be answered, however, is what your mutual fund will pay this year.

invest
in the future

They shall possess it forever,
from generation to generation
they shall live in it. *Isaiah 34:17b*

A tree is harvested for today's needs.
It takes faith and foresight
to plant for tomorrow.
Invest in Christian service by
remembering MCC in your will.

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

AMBS • window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Celebrating 50 years

Foundations for the future

Willard M. Swartley

Jesus spoke in a parable about foundations and alerted his followers to the opportunities and hazards of the future. To be sure, Jesus was not founding a seminary. But what he said is pertinent to preparing men and women to be leaders in ministry and mission.

Jesus taught about and called people to the reign of God. Rightly, the AMBS statement *Ministerial Formation and Theological Education in Mennonite Perspective* says, "Christian ministry finds its highest purpose in serving the church's calling to be the community of faith that witnesses...to God's reign as revealed in and through Jesus Christ."

Building on Christ for the church

Throughout their 50-year histories, a key concern of both Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary (now AMBS) has been **building on the foundation, Jesus Christ.** I remember H.S. Bender, former dean of Goshen Biblical Seminary, explicating Matthew 16:16-19, telling future ministers that Peter is the rock on which the church is built, and we are living stones built into this church founded by Jesus Christ.

The 1992 theological statement of AMBS identifies the seminary and its curriculum as **church-based** in its structure and priorities, so the ministry for which AMBS prepares people signals the reign of God in the community headed by Jesus Christ.

Strong foundations

AMBS has been committed to **strong biblical foundations,** as the names of MBS and GBS indicate. The **Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition of faith** and understanding has also been strong, represented in the curriculum and contributions of the Institute of Mennonite Studies. Seeing **the community as a context for learning** has significantly shaped pastoral education at AMBS. And the **international dimension** has been present in the composition of the student body and also in the experiences and perspectives of the faculty. These emphases continue.

At AMBS **worship** is essential in strengthening relationships to God, opening us to the shaping power of God's Spirit. "The wind blows where it will" and thus the "holy moments" come unannounced, through experiences we do not plan. In times of adversity, especially Marlin Miller's sudden death, we were forced to "raw trust," hardly able to speak, groping for the love and hope that overcomes the sting of death.

Preparing for the future

We have launched a new plan of study that prepares Master of Divinity students for ministry through coursework and supervised field education. We are strengthening the preaching component with more thorough and deliberate teaching and evaluation. Our Spiritual Formation program seeks to help each student deepen his or her spiritual life as the foundation for effective and faithful ministry.

Our present faculty, like those before it— building on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ—not only excels in teaching and writing, but also in serving the church in many additional ways—locally, binationally, and even internationally.

Beckoning horizons lie before us: growing summer school to serve a broader group of people, expanding conference-based leaning opportunities across the continent, summer institute in mission and evangelism, closer faculty-conference relationships, preparation for bi-vocational ministries.

These efforts build on the strengths of the past 50 years and establish new and strong foundations for the future— to strengthen the ways we work with and within the church to prepare people to serve God.

Willard M. Swartley is dean of AMBS and has taught New Testament at AMBS since 1978.

50 years AMBS
Foundations for the future

Strong foundations:

A tradition of preparing workers for the church

1945: Mennonite Bibilical Seminary

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," was the theme of A.S. Rosenberger's sermon at the opening of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, October 4, 1945. Rosenberger was pastor of Salem Church, Dalton, Ohio, and president of the seminary board.

Rosenberger concluded, "We have every confidence that out of this institution will go young men and young women whom the Lord can use in a real and vital way. We humbly pray God may use this institution for this great purpose."

General Conference Mennonite Church efforts in theological education had begun in the 1860s. Building on these earlier efforts, MBS was established in 1945 in affiliation with Bethany Theological Seminary in Chicago. This cooperation gave the fledgling MBS a solid start.

From 1945-1951, MBS purchased several properties on Woodlawn Avenue, creating a "campus" with offices, apartments, a library, and a worship center for the seminary.

1946: Goshen Biblical Seminary

Goshen College, founded in 1894, nurtured a strong Bible department which, like its other departments, was called a "school." From this emerged Goshen Biblical Seminary.

Under Dean Harold S. Bender,the Bible School established a rigorous curriculum with faculty who were leaders in the church.

Graduate level work was first offered in 1933, and in 1942 a five-year bachelor of theology program began in cooperation with Hesston (Kan.) College.

The name changed to "Goshen College Biblical Seminary" in 1946, thus creating the first seminary of the Mennonite Church. A seminary building on the college campus was dedicated in 1959 with GBS continunig under the umbrella of Goshen College for another ten years.

Bender, in his 1946-47 annual report, wrote, "Our calling as a training school for Christian workers is to move forward with the church in its expanding program and furnish more and better workers for its activities."

Woodlawn Mennonite Church on South Woodlawn Avenue was the "Christian life center" for MBS in Chicago and became an opportunity for outreach into the surrounding community.

Lettering above the pulpit in the GBS chapel announced, "Jesus is Lord." As worshippers walked out, they were encouraged to "Go therefore and make disciples."

AMBS timeline

1860s | 1870s | 1880s | 1890s | 1900s | 1910s | 1920s

1868
Wadsworth Institute
Wadsworth, Ohio
(GCMC) opens to
provide theological
education

1894
Elkhart Institute
(MC) begins,
later named
Goshen College

1914
Bluffton College
(GCMC) Bible
Department
reorganized
as a seminary

1921
Bluffton College
seminary
becomes
Witmarsum
Theological
Seminary

50 years AMBS
Foundations for the future

1958: Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

"Tuesday, Sept. 3 [1957], was a day of historic significance for Mennonites of North America," reported *Mennonite Weekly Review*, as ground was broken in Elkhart, Ind., for AMBS.

Initially the Elkhart campus housed MBS, the AMBS library and the offices of the Institute of Mennonite Studies, with joint GBS-MBS classes occurring only two afternoons a week. Once begun, cooperation gained momentum with AMBS becoming one seminary in 1993.

Ross T. Bender, who served as dean for 15 years, commented in a 1964 *Goshen College Bulletin:* "We feel that it is the Lord who is leading us and bringing us together." Looking back almost 30 years later, Bender said, "There would not be talk of integration in the church now if there had not been several decades of pastors studying together. AMBS is like the point of the plow that prepared the soil for cooperation in many areas."

At the time of AMBS's 25th anniversary, Erland Waltner, president of MBS from 1958-78, reflected on the pioneering cooperative effort : "We have all learned that cooperation, whether in theological education or in any other area of service, does not come easily. . . . It requires some readiness to take initiative, to take risks. It calls for mutual respect at every level. . . . In short, it calls for obedience to God who sent Jesus in order that we might understand our oneness with God and with each other in the community of faith and discipleship. It is indeed, nothing less than a gift of God and a work of the Holy Spirit among us."

AMBS mission statement

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is an inter-Mennonite educational community:

- *grounded in the Scriptures,*
- *committed to the Anabaptist heritage, and*
- *dedicated to the Christian church's calling in today's world.*

AMBS seeks to educate and enable men and women to become:

- *spiritually mature,*
- *theologically informed and discerning,*
- *practically qualified, and*
- *ethically committed*

ministers of the church of Jesus Christ.

(1988 abbreviated statement)

The Administrative Committee of AMBS guided the initial cooperative efforts: Erland Waltner, S.F. Pannabecker, Harold S. Bender, and Paul Mininger.

Buildings are not the most important element of a seminary, but they do help to define the institution. The Sermon on the Mount Chapel is AMBS's most identifiable structure and is the hub of worship life for the seminary.

1930s | 1940s | 1950s | 1960s | 1970s | 1980s | 1990s

1931
Witmarsum seminary closes

1933
Goshen College offers four-year B.Th. degree

1945
Mennonite Biblical Seminary (GCMC) founded in Chicago

1946
Goshen College Bible School named Biblical Seminary

1954
First joint MBS-GBS summer session

1958
MBS moves to Elkhart; AMBS is launched as joint classes begin on Elkhart campus

1962
Ross T. Bender appointed as dean of both MBS and GBS

1967-1968
Dean's Seminar: study of distinctive contribution of Free Church tradition to theological education

1969
GBS moves to Elkhart campus

1990
Marlin E. Miller becomes first joint AMBS president

1993
AMBS incorporated as one seminary

President's Window

Fifty years ago the Mennonite Church and the General Conference each felt the need for more trained church workers. Their answer was Goshen Biblical Seminary on the grounds of Goshen College, and Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago. More than 2,000 men and women have studied at these two schools, and their successor, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Much has changed in these fifty years, most obviously in society and culture. Television, unheard of when the seminaries began, has become the primary means of mass communication. The populace has both become more urban and less rooted in the communities where they were raised. Agricultural and manufacturing jobs have decreased as service occupations, technical positions and unemployment have increased. Education levels have risen dramatically. The sense that the people of Canada and United States were one has been proven an illusion through intense political struggle over social issues, and the presence of many minority groups.

We Mennonites often consider ourselves somewhat separate from society, and yet each of these changes has entered our communities with full force—with positive, negative or mixed effect. Some small steps have been taken so that our church might reflect the ethnic mix of our setting. Salaried ministerial leadership, although far from universal, has become common. The controversies of our day are frequently mirrored in our churches, sometimes with little obviously Christian content. Our Mennonite church continues to need well prepared leaders, but the world and church in which they will work has changed in these fifty years.

Here is the central challenge of AMBS—to remain faithful to its mandate of preparing church workers whose foundation is Christ and Scripture, with the recognition that as society and church evolve, the preparation required also changes. In other words, true fidelity to the original call requires change. In the process, however, AMBS must avoid the all too common tendency of college or seminary to drift away from the church. It must stay in constant touch with the church in order to remain sensitive to its needs. In the early 1990s AMBS revised its curriculum in an effort to orient itself more fully toward the church. But this is a never ending task. As AMBS celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, we recommits ourselves to this mission. May the prayer vigil of the anniversary weekend serve this end.

- Gerald Gerbrant, Interim President

FALL SEMESTER WEEKEND COURSE

Anabaptist
History
&
Theology

Details:
Three-credit-hour course meets four weekends during fall semester, Friday evening through Saturday afternoon

Contact the AMBS registrar,
Ruth Ann Gardner
Telephone: 219 296-6213
E-mail: RAGAMBS@aol.com

AMBS Panorama

Record turn-out

Fifty people participated in the spring Seminary Sampler, an open house at AMBS for people exploring the possibility of seminary study. March 3-4 was packed with a welcoming coffeehouse evening, two sample class periods, tours, time for questions and answers, and meals with faculty and students. Strong support and encouragement from several Mennonite colleges helped to boost the turn-out.

Interterm 1997

Offerings during next interterm, January 6-24, 1997, are:
Isaiah with Ben Ollenburger, Hymnology with Mary Oyer, , Christian Attitudes Toward War, Peace and Revolution with Ted Koontz, Youth Ministry (instructor to be named), and Premarital and Marital Counseling (instructor to be named).

Two special study tours are offered in connection with the World Conference in India: The Gospel in Cultures (Middle East and India) with Jacob Elias, and Current Issues in Mission and Theological Education (Europe and former Soviet Union) with Walter Sawatsky.

Pastors' Week 1997

"Story Shaping Faith: The Power of Story in Ministry" is the theme of Pastors' Week, January 27-31, 1997.

Come to learn about the power of stories in many different ministry settings—preaching, counseling, congregational life, family life, and Christian education. Come also to learn from and enjoy storiesof Mennonites from the past and from the around the world today.

Visit our home page

An AMBS home page on the World Wide Web introduces people to our programs and our faculty and includes a listing of summer school courses, e-mail addresses of faculty and staff, and recent news releases. You can find it at:
http://members.aol.com/mennosem/home.htm

Ron Sider at AMBS

"Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?" Ron Sider asked in a presentation to AMBS students and area residents on March 14.

The president of Evangelicals for Social Action and minister in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference is concerned that Christians too quickly jump to conclusions without "doing their homework."

Opposed to one-issue politics, he said God cares about the family, the poor, the oppressed, creation, and many other issues. Christians must work toward the balance of concerns that they see in the Scriptures.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Page 1, J. Tyler Klassen; page 3 (chapel), Howard Zehr; others, file photos

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

Spring 1996 *Printed in U.S.A.*

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
Telephone 219 295-3726

News

Board appoints Schrag general secretary

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When James Schrag, 51, pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, begins his work as the next general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) Aug. 15, he knows he won't be stepping into "a glamour job."

In fact, he says, he will need "a healthy measure of humility" in order to lead effectively the 64,000-member denomination during a critical time in its history as it moves toward integration with the 96,000-member Mennonite Church (MC).

Schrag will replace Vern Preheim, who has served as general secretary since 1980. The GC General Board approved Schrag's appointment at its annual Council of Commissions here March 8-12.

Describing himself as "a big-picture, future-oriented" person, Schrag says he was willing to accept this call because "we are at a juncture of a major transition in the church. The transition itself is what energizes me. This is a window of opportunity. God is giving two groups of the Mennonite church another chance to make a difference."

Schrag has been a long-time advocate of integration. He has organized meetings of dual-conference congregations since 1989 and serves as their contact person. He also is the chair of the East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council.

His commitment to inter-Mennonite work is rooted in his childhood. Growing up as the son of Menno and Gertrude Schrag in Newton, Kan., he was exposed to conversations around the supper table that led "to a broader understanding of the Mennonite world." His father was the editor of the *Mennonite Weekly Review* from 1935 to 1969.

He sees the "process of integration as every bit as important as the outcome. Have we been inclusive and fair? There is no way we can arrive at a good outcome without a good process."

Essential to a healthy process, Schrag says, is the recognition that the MCs and GCs are "equal" in terms of their traditions. "Numbers are irrelevant. We need to remember what is important for the whole church," he says. "If GCs have a good approach, we should use it. If MCs have a good approach, we should use it."

At the same time, while he hopes an integrated church will take the best from each denomination, Schrag thinks "we should look for a fresh, third way, something that is not MC or GC. When that happens, it will be cause for great celebration."

Schrag

In the meantime, Schrag knows the process of integration won't happen overnight. "For GCs, the push-pull comes from the north and south, while for the MCs it is east and west," he says. "The tugging will be with us for awhile. We will get tired of it. We will get exasperated with it.

"We can choose to view this as negative or we can view this as positive, generated by people who care, who feel invested in the outcome."

There are other issues, in addition to integration, that need to be addressed if the Mennonite church wants to have a viable future, says Schrag, who has served with the dually-affiliated Oak Grove Church since 1985. Prior to that, he served as pastor at Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, from 1973 to 1985.

For starters, the church needs to do a

Inside the news

Annual meetings focus on integration / p. 14

DGS considers fund-raising campaign / p. 15

COE looks at Faith & Life Press finances / p. 16

CHM looks at integrating service programs / p. 17

COM increases number of mission workers / p. 18

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., is planning a celebration April 26-28 in honor of the 50th anniversaries of Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen Biblical Seminary. Activities include a 50-hour prayer vigil, worship services, recreational events, storytelling and a banquet on Saturday, April 27. Former employees are invited to a reception Friday evening, April 26. For more information or to register for the banquet, call Andrew Kreider at (219) 296-6268.

• • •

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has discontinued its Mexico internship program after its first three-year review, effective after the completion of the current academic year. The review committee found the program was costing the college significantly more than initially anticipated. "Discontinuing programs, especially those like the Mexico program, in which students have positive experiences, is always difficult," says Bethel president Doug Penner. "But at the same time we have to recognize that evaluations set in place at the time of program initiations are designed exactly for the purpose of assessing program viability in light of experience."

At two delegate meetings of its supporting conferences in February, Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute did not get the financial support it needs to make a new start. Last fall the school banked hopes on a plan to rename the school with a plan to have a separate association administer it. (The school was run by the Mennonite conferences in Saskatchewan and Alberta.) The SCBI board in February asked the two conferences to sell the campus and its assets to the new school for $1, with the conference to retain responsibility for current liabilities, which include a $125,000 accumulated operating deficit. The proposal asked that the conferences continue to support the new school with grants that would decrease each year. The two conferences voted no. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

● ● ●

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.) board of directors met in Elkhart Feb. 8-10. The board discussed leadership arrangements at AMBS prior to and following the arrival of the new president, J. Nelson Kraybill. They approved the creation of a position of vice president of advancement and administration and encouraged staff to fill this position in the near future. Filling this position will create a four-person leadership team at AMBS: president, dean, vice president of advancement and administration, and director of business and finance. The board celebrated reaching the $8 million (U.S.) mark in the Partners for Ministry campaign. Contributions and letters of intent reached that mark just two days prior to the board meeting. The board reviewed plans for the campaign in the coming year. In this phase, all congregations in the General Conference Mennonite Church and congregations in the Mennonite Church that relate to AMBS will be contacted with an opportunity to contribute.

better job of understanding and affirming the younger generation. There is little room for the generational conflict that is present in many congregations today, he says, noting that the older generation tends to be more program-oriented, while the younger generation is more relationship-oriented.

In addition, he says, "I don't think people in the pews are asking for more finely-tuned programs. They want encouragement and direction. They want a denomination that understands their spiritual needs.

> **"This is a window of opportunity. God is giving two groups of the Mennonite church another chance to make a difference."**
>
> ***James Schrag***

"They are asking questions like, Do I make a difference? Does the church make a difference? People are not asking the church to go broader; they are asking the church to go deeper."

With 23 years of experience as a pastor, Schrag thinks he will be able to help the General Conference stay in touch with the congregational perspective. "The General Conference exists for the sake of the congregations," he says. "Our main reason to exist is not to perpetuate programs but to help keep congregational life alive and vibrant so that we can be united in ministry."

Schrag received a master of divinity degree in 1973 from Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. He also is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

He has served on the GC program committee, GC Western District Conference education committee, Bethel College board of directors, Bluffton (Ohio) College presidential search committee and the MC Ohio Conference executive committee. He currently is the chair of the GC Higher Education Council.

Schrag and his wife, Judy, who is a teacher, served with Mennonite Central Committee under the Teachers Abroad Program in Kenya from 1967 to 1970. They have three daughters—Valerie, Melissa and Rachel.

Council of Commissions focuses on integration

Newton, Kansas (GCMC)—At the annual Council of Commissions sessions here March 8-12, the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) considered the role of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) as the GC and the Mennonite Church (MC) move toward integration.

How will Canadian Mennonites be represented in integration? The question of how Canadian Mennonites will participate in the integration process came up early in the meetings. "It seems whenever we discuss integration, the Canadian folks express feeling left out," said Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.

Canadian input: "I think we've settled who is at the table in the integration discussions," said Don Steelberg, Integration Committee member from Wichita, Kan. "I hope that minorities and Canadians ... will be very vocal."

Preheim pointed out that the Wichita '95 resolution states that only two parties—GC and MC—will move toward integration but are to do so in consultation with CMC.

Driedger

"CMC has a clear understanding of what we want to bring to the table. CMC is an entity in and of itself ... with definite programs and agenda," said Florence Driedger, Regina, Sask., CMC representative to the General Board.

Kathi Suderman, board member for Canada from Aberdeen, Sask., said that she understood her role was to represent Canada as a whole, not CMC. Both Steelberg and Delp questioned if Canadian interests and CMC interests are the same.

"That is a major issue," Driedger admitted, "but we are a different country and are different in how we do business."

"The way to be one is in partnership, not in subservience," added CMC general secretary Helmut Harder.

"I grant that we have differences, but it seems that it's as a church that we need to work," said Loretta Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo.

"If we could establish clarity about separation we would end up with more cooperation, not less," observed Dennis Koehn, Goshen, Ind. "It's a paradox."

In response to the discussion, the board passed two proposals. The first asks that CMC be guaranteed representation on integration task forces such as overseas mission and voluntary service. In other words, there would be an equal number of MC and GC representatives on the task forces, but the CMC board would recommend half the GC representatives.

The second proposal states that any integrated structures be approved by the GC and MC boards but that GC approval would be contingent on a yes vote from the CMC member to the board.

The CMC board is to respond to the models before the joint GC and MC board sessions this fall.

The two proposals are "a way to follow the letter and spirit of the Wichita '95 resolution and a pragmatic way to finesse the structural problems we currently have," explained James Harder, North Newton, Kan.

In response, Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg, said, "It sounds a little bit yet like the parent taking care of the child, but I'm not saying it can't work."

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif., said the proposals were a first attempt "at giving CMC a voice and recognizing the voice."

The issue of Canadian representation was also discussed in relation to a proposal to integrate ministerial leadership offices. The General Board tabled the initial proposal on March 8 because it did not include CMC as an equal partner with the MC and GC. On March 11, the board adopted a revision that calls for integration of "the present ministerial leadership offices of the MC Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, the GC General Board, the CMC General Board, the staff, and the services provided by these offices ... effective Feb. 1, 1997."

In other business the General Board

- adopted a 1997 expenditure budget of $4,183,519 (U.S.), a 2 percent decrease from 1996;
- gave the Commission on Education and the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) permission to use up to $15,000 and $18,000, respectively, in emergency reserve funds to maintain programs in 1997;
- approved a staff salary increase of 3 percent;
- affirmed resolutions from the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and CHM to create a task force to develop a proposal to integrate the mission boards of COM, CHM and Mennonite Board of Missions, with CMC represented (the MBM board had approved, at an earlier date, the creation of this task force);
- invited three Mennonite churches in Mexico—Blumenau, Steinreich and Burwalde—to consider joining the GC;
- approved Elkhart, Ind., as the site of the March 1997 Council of Commissions;
- recommended that the GC delegate sessions planned for Winnipeg in 1997 be held July 6-8. U.S. delegates will meet July 5. *Dave Linscheid*

"If we could establish clarity about separation we would end up with more cooperation, not less. It's a paradox."

Dennis Koehn

DGS considers fund-raising campaign and stewardship

The Division of General Services (DGS) discussed a proposal for a major fund-raising campaign and heard from the director of an inter-Mennonite stewardship education project.

Planned giving director Gary Franz presented an initial outline for the campaign in a plenary session for all commissions and boards. He noted that giving to General Conference has declined in recent years but presented statistics indicating GC households give at least two times more than the average U.S. household. Franz advocated that integration of the MC and GC presented an opportunity for fund-raising.

Later, DGS responded to the proposal. "It seems appropriate to celebrate integration with a campaign in

If "two-thirds of Jesus' sayings are economic," then Christians' problems with stewardship might come from how they read the Bible. That was the message brought by M. Douglas Meeks to 120 participants in Pastors' Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary at the end of January. Meeks, academic dean of Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, wrote his book *God the Economist* in order to get Christians to see the God of the Bible not as a universal political emperor but as a homemaker or economist trying to "create a home so that we will not be slaves." Meeks said, "It is almost impossible to practice Christian stewardship in North America." The market presumes that almost everything is a commodity for sale rather than a gift from God for a purpose, he said.

• • •

"Let All Within Us Praise! A Symposium on Worship" will be held at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., May 2-4. The symposium will include workshops and worship experiences that examine the problems and possibilities of effective worship and worship planning. Keynote speakers include Paul Westermeyer, professor of church music at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.; Kenneth Nafziger, professor of voice and conducting at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; Marlene Kropf, minister of worship and spirituality for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and instructor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Keith Harder, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., and Patricia Shelly, associate professor of Bible and religion and campus pastor at Bethel College. For information or to register, contact the Bethel College ticket office at (316) 284-5281.

The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan unanimously adopted a statement at its annual meeting March 4 urging the Taiwanese government to join the United Nations and other international organizations. The statement also condemned China's missile testing exercises conducted near Taiwan. (Mennonite World Conference)

• • •

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., announces its 1996 summer camp program. Camps offered include girls and boys basketball, tennis, volleyball, soccer and music camps, including one music camp to be held at Camp Camrec in Washington. For information on the camps contact Bethel College office of conferences at 1-800-522-1887 or (316) 284-5248.

• • •

On Jan. 26, U.S. President Bill Clinton signed into law a one-year moratorium on the use of anti-personnel landmines by U.S. forces, to take effect in three years. The law also extends the existing moratorium on U.S. exports of anti-personnel landmines for another year. The Clinton administration is advocating exemption of "self-destruct" landmines, cheaper to produce and sell, from an international ban. (MCC *Washington Memo*)

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee Canada welcomes budget changes encouraging Canadians to give more to charity, but it is disappointed in reductions to foreign aid. David Pankratz of MCC Canada's Financial Services department says an increase in the general annual limit on donations to 50 percent of net income from 20 percent will benefit the agency little because it has few large donors. But he says the raise in the amount that can be claimed on estates, which rose from 20 percent to 100 percent, will benefit the agency. The $150 million cut to foreign aid means that only 0.25 percent of Canada's gross domestic product will go to foreign aid.

the year 2000," said Elmer Wall, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

When asked what a campaign might fund, Dennis Koehn, Goshen, Ind., said it should be "future-oriented, something to expand our capacity to do future mission and service," including technological innovations and creative tools for church work in the 21st century.

The DGS board and the GC General Board gave Franz a green light to proceed with a campaign proposal but instructed him to process it with the MC and CMC. GC delegates would vote on the plan in 1997, with campaign activity to begin in 1999.

In a presentation to DGS, Mark Vincent, director of The Giving Project: Growing Faithful Stewards in the Church, outlined a strategy for developing a theology of money for North American Mennonite congregations. "Money is God-like in this part of the world. How we use it shows what we care about," he said, noting also that "The Giving Project is not a microwave approach but a long baking process. Reorientation to money must be deliberate."

In other business DGS

- made budget and salary recommendations to the General Board;
- reviewed GC communication and gave input regarding a new periodical for the integrated Mennonite denomination. *Dave Linscheid*

Task force appointed to deal with FLP's bottom line

Commission on Education (COE) members got a reality check when they heard the financial report of Faith & Life Press (FLP).

With a net loss of $183,367 (U.S.) for the 1995 fiscal year, the picture was far from pretty. "The numbers are very, very sobering," said Diane Kinser Born, who started as FLP director of finance and production in July 1995.

She reported that due to the net loss, FLP had to borrow $180,000 from the General Conference in order to cover its 1995 operating expenses, which primarily include salaries and marketing costs. She also projected that if the press continued to function at a similar level over the next five years, it would need to borrow an additional $535,000 to remain viable.

"Currently we are producing inventory at a rate higher than the sales," Born said. "The issues the auditors laid before us a year ago have not changed. We need to generate income and control expenses."

Gross profit from sales has increased from $257,891 in 1985 to $340,083 in 1995, an increase of 32 percent. On the other hand, operating expenses jumped from $181,961 in 1985 to $641,114 in 1995, an increase of 252 percent.

Generally speaking, operating expenses have steadily risen over the last 11 years. However, it wasn't until 1993 that FLP first experienced a substantial net loss.

Norma Johnson, FLP publisher and COE executive secretary, reported that some of the factors that affected the cash flow and operating expenses were major projects such as *Jubilee* and *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, a stricter policy on inventory write-offs, increased personnel costs and competition from independent publishers.

Board members were clearly both surprised and frustrated by the figures. "We cannot continue this way. The conference will not allow us to continue this way. We have to make some decisions," said Judy Miller, Othello, Wash.

"It's ugly," agreed Terry Schellenberg, Calgary. "The wall is painted clearly. Where are the windows [that will lead us] out?"

"Bookselling is as Anabaptist as apple pie is American and as ice hockey is Canadian."
Jeff Wright

Janelle Ortman, Marion, S.D., noted that few board members actually have a business background. She wondered how they would be able to make capable decisions in a "make it or break it" situation.

In consultation with Division of General Services, COE agreed to appoint a leadership task force to deal with FLP's financial problems over the next year. The task force's mandate is as follows: (1) to present a business plan to GC trustees for their approval; (2) to implement the business assumptions, which include issues related to accountability and creation of a goal-oriented work environment; (3) to use every means possible to reduce oper-

Carla Reimer

New encouragement: *COE staff participate in closing worship at Council of Commissions. From left to right: Terry Graber, Diane Born, Mark Regier and Eleanor Snyder*

ating expenses and cost of sales, while increasing sale revenue; (4) to make final yes or no decisions on all products, effective immediately; (5) to design a leadership structure for board review and approval; (6) to bring FLP into long-term financial viability. The task force consists of board members and staff from DGS and COE, together with the GC general secretary.

The board also raised concerns about how to increase the level of trust among staff as well as between the board and staff. "Every effort must be made to communicate, to build the team, to work on a cooperative basis," said Jake Elias, Elkhart.

They made several suggestions for increased communication, which included the following: that administrative staff meet with a consultant for a retreat in the near future; that the executive secretary communicate with the board at least twice a month; that the board be prepared to ask "sharper, clearer questions" of the executive secretary.

COE also heard reports from staff who work with youth, young adults, adults and children. *Jubilee: God's Good News*, which accounted for 33 percent of FLP's 1995 sales, continues to be well-liked by most GC churches.

However, *Jubilee* director Rosella Wiens Regier reported that a few churches have expressed dismay over the curriculum's inclusive language. *Jubilee* was cooperatively published with other Anabaptist groups.

"You are to be commended for your approach," said Helen Kruger, Osler, Sask. "This is not about women but about having a healing image of God. It happened to come up in our children's curriculum. I wish we had the courage to address it elsewhere."

Wes Sawatsky, Altona, Man., said, "In a bizarre way, I am encouraged. The concern has changed from New Age to how we use language. Next year it will be something else. This shows the problem is not with the material."

The board gave approval to a statement on the integration process. The statement is supportive of the move to integrate the GC and the MC. It identifies COE's core areas of focus as consulting, publishing and distribution.

COE chair Jeff Wright, Alta Loma, Calif., ended the meeting with a reminder that "book-selling is as Anabaptist as apple pie is American and as ice hockey is Canadian. I come away from here with new encouragement. God has not given up on us yet." *Carla Reimer*

CHM approves proposal to look at integration of service programs

The Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) affirmed a proposal to look at integrating Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) with Mennonite Church service programs.

Laura Loewen, Montreal, asked Brad Reimer, MVS associate director for Canada, how he saw this merger affecting his work in Canada. He said that the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) is discussing whether it wants more ownership of MVS in Canada. There are only four MVS units in Canada, but about 40 percent of MVS workers come from Canada.

He added that there haven't been as many requests for units in Canada because Canada has had more of a safety net for the poor than the United States. But with the safety net in Canada eroding, he thinks more requests will come.

Craig Maven, Berne, Ind., said he wants to see more detail of how such a merger would work.

In the meantime, the board gave MVS staff permission to continue to work cooperatively in areas such as joint orientation for volunteers and

The General Conference Mennonite Church received more than $215,000 U.S. in fraternal benefits from Mennonite Mutual Aid during 1995. Most of this assistance came in the form of grants that matched funds raised in local congregations to meet a wide variety of needs. The funds were part of a record $2.8 million in fraternal benefits distributed by MMA in 1995. Most of the grants were from the Sharing Fund programs; other grants were for seminary and college scholarships. New for 1996 are a continuing education grant fund for pastors, a will preparation grant fund, and a new wellness program.

• • •

An interactive visitors' center based on Jesus' life and teaching could become a reality in his hometown of Nazareth, Israel. Mennonite Board of Missions is considering joining with a Scottish mission group and Christians in Nazareth to create the center. The MBM board of directors on Feb. 23 appointed D. Michael Hostetler—a videographer from Scottdale, Pa., to direct a feasibility study for the center. Half the 2.5 million pilgrims who come annually to Israel visit Nazareth. Few stay more than two hours because of a lack of sites to visit. This proposed center would "illuminate the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth to pilgrims from around the world and of all faith backgrounds," according to Hostetler. The center could open as early as November 1999 on 12 acres next to Nazareth Hospital, which owns the land with MBM partner Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society.

After confessing to murder, John Claypool, 34, is in jail, but his spirit is free, reports Evangelical Press News Service. In September 1995, Claypool confessed to his pastor that he had murdered a man and his wife in Lake City, Minn., 20 years ago. He was high on alcohol and drugs, and said he wanted "just to see what it felt like to kill someone." Authorities suspected Claypool, but without his confession could not convict him. Since the murders, he has married, divorced, and become a Christian. His minister, Roger Thompson, pastor of the 1,500-member Berean Baptist Church in suburban Minneapolis, Minn., helped Claypool approach the police. (*Encounter*)

• • •

Prompted by disgruntled callers, a Pittsburgh-area talk radio station interviewed the producer of the Mennonite churches' "Stop the Violence" radio spots Feb. 20. When WBCW-AM in Jeanette, Pa., aired the public service spots, two callers said on air they thought the spots were probably from a "left-wing church that had been bought off by the James and Sarah Brady gun control people," says Jerry Holsopple, a producer for the media department of Mennonite Board of Missions. Holsopple agreed to clear things up in a live phone interview with the station's host Clair Thomas. "I explained that the spots arise out of who we are as a historic peace church with roots in the 16th century and that we have no connections with the Bradys," Holsopple says. "We also talked about the content of the spots that deal with violent language, spouse abuse, and about the very real issue of parents who fear losing control and accidentally shooting a loved one with a gun around the house," Holsopple says. "You've got two converts (to the Mennonite church) right here," said Verna M. Calisti, station general manager. The station is airing the spots twice a day.

joint recruitment.

CHM also endorsed the formation of a task force to look at integrating the mission boards of CHM, COM and Mennonite Board of Missions.

In-depth review of MILC: CHM chair Floyd Bartel, Newton, asked, "How well is the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (MILC) working?"

Lawrence Hart from Oklahoma said, "It's not always working well."

Nancy Brubaker, Reedley, Calif., said there seemed to be no consensus from MILC to the questions CHM had asked them in preparation for the in-depth review.

People are interested in church planting, but there isn't money available in CHM's budget to help them.

Marilyn Miller

Betty Hart from Oklahoma said that MILC is now at its weakest.

Lois Barrett, executive secretary for CHM, asked if there was any discussion in the MILC meeting about alternative funding for Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Gordon Flight, school principal, said they'll have to look at reducing expenses. Bartel said that Hopi Mission School is behind about $7,000 in its support of MVS workers at the school.

CHM agreed to have board members Bartel, James Wenger and Barney Habegger propose some recommendations in response to MILC's in-depth review by June.

In other discussion, CHM considered how to help churches obtain additional training in evangelism and peacemaking. Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries, said the Andrew Center, a program of the Church of the Brethren, is developing a list of evangelists.

The Church of the Brethren, Miller said, spends $211,000 per year on evangelism, while CHM spends $10,000. She recommended that CHM continue its membership in the Andrew Center for one year. CHM agreed to this.

Miller said she has had several people recently say they are interested in church planting, but there isn't money available in CHM's budget to help.

The lack of resources became a theme of the reporting. In peace and justice ministries, Miller said, the Peace Factory has more requests than it can fill and works on a shoestring budget. It plans to be at the Olympics in Atlanta this summer.

MVS director Chuck Neufeld said that MVS has received nine inquiries, including three proposals, from congregations for new MVS units, but MVS can't fill them because they don't have enough volunteers or funds.

In other business, CHM

- affirmed Barrett's involvement in the Gospel and Our Culture Network, an ecumenical organization that is examining how the Gospel message can be shared in the post-Christian culture in North America;
- heard from members of the Mennonite Association of Hispanic Mennonite Churches (AMIGA) that they want to be a heterogeneous church, not a homogenous one, since Spanish-speaking people in the United States and Canada eventually become English-speaking;
- decided to add a half-time position in congregational resources for peace and justice;
- agreed that the Student Aid Fund for Non-Registrants should also apply to students who cannot get loans because they are war-tax resisters;
- adopted a 1996 budget of $917,813 (U.S.);
- met with representatives of CMC about communication between CMC and CHM. *Gordon Houser*

COM increases number of mission workers, looks to future

The Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) is increasing its number of mission workers overseas. COM approved eight mission workers for service at this year's Council of Commissions, up from the three approved last year. COM anticipates sending 14 long-term mission workers in 1996, compared with six last year. New countries for COM in 1996 are Thailand and Chile. COM is also exploring possible work in Vietnam and Laos.

COM is finding an increasing number of mission workers coming from various ethnic backgrounds. Among those approved, two are Hispanic and two are Laotian.

The board also discussed integration with the MC Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). "Last October and again in February, MBM took two major strides toward us with arms outstretched, and it's time for us to respond," said COM chair Tom Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.

COM members spoke in favor of the creation of an integrated mission structure, although they wondered how to include other Mennonite organizations, such as Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. These organizations have expressed a desire to maintain some independence from an integrated mission agency.

John M. Miller, Tigard, Ore., said he has been involved in exploring the possibility of a Northwest regional mission center. "For those of us that live on the West Coast, Newton is 1,500 miles away," he said.

COM recommended including as many of these groups as possible in the integration discussions.

Alice Ruth Ramseyer raised the question of how mission workers will feel about integration. "Please don't forget you are representing ... mission workers overseas who are going to be affected," she said.

"I have been very happy with COM's style ... sending us out, trusting us to make decisions. ... I would have been unhappy much of the time if I had worked with MBM, which has a much more directional style," said Ramseyer.

"There is a different style we're going to be uncomfortable with at times," agreed Miller. "But we are committed. ... We have a mandate to follow through on the structural steps of integration."

Three visiting Zairians reported to COM the many evangelism goals the church has set and its lack of finances to complete them. Fimbo Ganvunze, president of the Mennonite Church of Zaire, reported they have a membership of 80,000. They want to begin more evangelism in the cities of Zaire and in other parts of Africa. They have sent a mission worker to Angola and want to develop mission work in Congo, a nation just north of Zaire.

He said the Zairian church wants to find a "new way of working together [with North American churches] financially." He said, "We always come against this wall of not enough funds. ... We have a lot of priorities, but we don't have the funds." The delegation visited Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission board meetings the following weekend in Elkhart. COM does all its Africa mission work through AIMM.

Garry Prieb, AIMM executive secretary, said that AIMM was going to negotiate with the Zairian representatives at the AIMM meetings to "hammer out a new working agreement between Mennonite Church of Zaire and AIMM." He said former MBM missionary David Shenk would serve as a third-party mediator to the negotiations.

Reporting on the robbery of Mennonite Ministries headquarters in Lesotho Jan. 19, Prieb said the son of a pastor who relates to Mennonite Ministries had confessed to participating

Dave Linscheid

Many evangelism goals: *Guests from the Mennonite Church of Zaire address Council of Commissions delegates. At COM sessions they told of many evangelism efforts by the Zairian Mennonites. From left to right: Kakesa Khakha, Pumbu Gambanda Fimbo, president Fimbo Ganvunze and Garry Prieb, executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission*

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency may use missionaries as operatives, according to *The Washington Post*. The *Post* reported Feb. 22 that CIA officials admitted a "controversial loophole" exists in agency policy that permits the CIA to "recruit American journalists as agents, use news-gathering organizations as cover and (employ) clerics or missionaries for clandestine work overseas." A CIA official says the agency has no statement as to whether or not overseas personnel connected with U.S.-based religious groups have been used as fronts for the CIA in the past 20 years. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Fifteen former students of the Alberni Indian Residential School in British Columbia are suing the United Church of Canada and the Canadian government for alleged past abuses. The suit, which alleges incidents of abuse that occurred primarily in the 1960s, also names four individual defendants formerly employed by the school. One of those, Arthur Henry Plint, was sentenced to 11 years in prison last spring on conviction of a number of criminal charges relating to sexual assaults that occurred during the 1940s, '50s and '60s, when Plint was a dormitory supervisor at the school. The other three individuals were all principals of the school in the years Plint was employed there. The UCC was one of four denominations that administered the residential school system on behalf of the government. "You can't think that the damage done through five to seven generations can be addressed all of a sudden," says John Siebert of the UCC's human rights and aboriginal justice division. "I think we're still at the very front of a 20- or 30-year process of coming to grips with what exactly happened there." (*Christian Week* and *The United Church Observer*)

in the robbery.

The board endorsed a new structure for AIMM that creates a distinct AIMM U.S. and a distinct AIMM Canada. The new structure brings AIMM into line with Canadian law, which specifies the types of organizations that can receive transfers of donated funds.

The board endorsed a statement outlining its future relationship to China Educational Exchange. The statement approves broadening CEE's mandate to include "not only educational exchanges but church relationships and relief and development work." The statement also commits COM to increase its budget for CEE's ministries by at least 5 percent annually during the next three years.

"How do Chinese Mennonite churches in North America fit in?" asked Pat Houmphan, a new mission worker who will work in Thailand. The Chinese Mennonite community in North America has mixed feelings about how to carry out mission work in China. Some support the Three-Self Church, the officially recognized Christian church in China. Others are suspicious of the Three-Self Church and would prefer association with underground churches in China.

COM heard reports from many mission workers. George Veith, mission worker to Hong Kong, reported on the Hong Kong church's decision to adopt a cell church structure so that it would be able to continue should the Chinese government crack down on the church after China reclaims Hong Kong in 1997.

"As Anabaptists we think we are pious, but we have not developed the spiritual resources some other [denominations] have."
Glendon Klaassen

"If pastors are arrested, the church can go on," he said. He was also thankful that all the congregational leadership in Hong Kong is indigenous, so that "the Chinese government can't say it is being steered by the West."

Reporting on Botswana, mission worker Don Rempel Boschman said so many church members are dying from AIDS that pastors complain about the funeral work loads. He said many have two or three funerals per weekend.

Vision 2000: COM executive secretary Glendon Klaassen gave a "Vision 2000" report addressing the state of COM missions. He said, "The core, the base of our mission, is people." He sees the primary goal as being holistic, integrating witness and service aspects of mission.

He noted a growing call for trainers and resource people as evangelists and cited the need to develop a strong financial base. "We cannot take that for granted as we could a few years ago," he said, noting the need to develop relationships with younger donors.

He also called for prayer and spiritual growth among COM constituents: "As Anabaptists we think we are pious, but we have not developed the spiritual resources some other [denominations] have." At the same time, he noted many overseas churches' appreciation for Anabaptist distinctives, such as peace and service emphases.

He also noted the decreasing lengths of terms of current mission workers. "People today do not consider themselves career missionaries," he said. "We're ready to say it is OK to be in mission for six years or four years or eight years. I'm not sure we were ready to say that a few years ago." *Larry Penner*

Values? Sound money management? Expect both.

M M A

If you thought investing according to socially responsible guidelines and sound money management were mutually exclusive, think again.

MMA has been investing exclusively with social screens for the last 50 years.

This combination of sound money management and investing according to socially responsible guidelines is reflected in our mutual funds, MMA Praxis Mutual Funds.

For mutual funds that combine investments according to your values with sound money management, you need to find out more about MMA Praxis.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

Record

MINISTERS

Lawrence Burkholder was ordained as pastor at Wideman Church, Markham, Ont., Jan. 7.

Pye Chew is associate pastor at First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver.

Enoch Chor is pastor at Grace Chinese Church, Vancouver.

David Dick has resigned as pastor at First Church, Kelowna, B.C., effective this summer.

Alan Dyck will be pastor at Wellspring Christian Fellowship, Abbotsford, B.C. He replaces **Gary Loewen**.

Dan Esau will be associate pastor at Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, beginning May 1.

David Friesen is resigning as pastor at West Abbotsford (B.C.) Church, effective this summer.

Walter Froese was installed as senior pastor at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., Jan. 7.

George Hoeppner is resigning as pastor at First Church, Sardis, B.C., effective this summer.

John Hua has resigned as pastor at Peace Chinese Church, Richmond, B.C., effective this summer.

Helmut Isaak has resigned as pastor at First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, effective this August.

John Madsen is interim youth pastor at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C.

Jim Ratzlaff is pastor at Olivet Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Rebecca Seiling is part-time youth pastor at Floradale (Ont.) Church.

WORKERS

Linda and **Paul Dueck**, Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, will begin a two-year COM term in Paraguay in late May. Paul will teach music at the Evangelical Mennonite Center of Theology of Asuncion; Linda's role is yet to be determined.

Nikkel

Larry Nikkel, Wichita, Kan., has been named executive director of Mennonite Health Services. Nikkel had previously served as interim director of MHS.

Ziegler

Leanne Peters, First Church, Winnipeg, has completed a 14-month COM term teaching English classes in Miyazaki, Japan.

Patricia Ziegler, Findlay, Ohio, has been named assistant director of development and director of foundation and corporate relations at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission

Look for

THE **Mennonite**

on the web

http://www:southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

Harvest help wanted: truck drivers and combine operators. Starting mid-May and ending late August or mid-September.

Call **Lance Martens at (316) 543-2851**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **fraternal adviser** in the Kidron, Ohio, area to serve as a regional resource person and communication link with congregations, assisting them in accessing MMA services and programs. Qualified candidates will have the ability to motivate others, good communication, public speaking, organizational and management skills, an understanding of local church structures, and a willingness to travel.

If interested, please send resume to **MMA, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527**.

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking applicants for **MCC U.S. Peace and Justice director**, based in Akron, Pa. This three-year position is available July 1996. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Bachelor's degree required. Applicants should have strong leadership, management and communication skills and a capacity for biblical/theological reflection from an Anabaptist perspective on current peace and justice issues. Some travel required.

Interested people in the United States contact **Dwight McFadden, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**. Applications due **May 13**.

Faculty position in music department and preparatory program. One-half to 3/4-time beginning fall 1996. Doctorate preferred. Committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Conduct the University Chamber Orchestra and the Preparatory Program Youth Orchestra, string instruction and instrumental methods classes for music education students. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume **by April 30** to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track position in **apparel/textiles merchandising and design**; rank dependent on qualifications. Responsibilities include undergraduate courses in all areas of apparel and textiles, leadership for apparel/textiles program in advising, intern supervision and student recruitment; participation in professional organizations and overall maintenance of the apparel/textiles program; ability to teach introductory courses in interiors, resource management and/or human ecology. Successful candidates will hold an advanced degree in apparel and textiles or family and consumer sciences with demonstrated teaching ability in apparel and textiles. Master's degree required, Ph.D. preferred. Successful teaching experience, industry experience/ability to place and supervise student interns; enthusiasm for working with undergraduate students and participation in family and consumer sciences departmental efforts and activities. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until position is filled. Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac.

Submit letter of application, resume or vita, three letters of reference, and unofficial transcripts to **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. EOE

Reviews

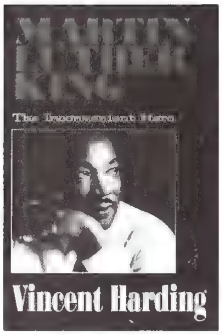
BOOKS

INCONVENIENT HERO

Martin Luther King: The Inconvenient Hero, *by Vincent Harding (Orbis Books, 1996, 146 pages)*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Harding's uncomfortable book aims to prod the memory of the real Martin Luther King Jr. That memory, Harding says, has been erased by a "national amnesia" that has sanctified a convenient King that bears little resemblance to the real man.



The King that Harding resurrects is a revolutionist. "The dispossessed of this nation," he quotes King, "must organize a revolution." King, he says, called for a direct action that, in King's words, "avoids violence but becomes militant and extreme enough to disrupt the flow of a city." No wonder that at the time most white Americans, and many white Mennonites, were scared.

Harding reminds us that King, in his later years, pushed the boundaries of "civil rights" to call attention to the injustices of poverty and the war in Vietnam. King identified a "triple threat" of militarism, materialism and racism that was destroying America. How many Americans that today celebrate Martin Luther King Day would agree? Or how many would agree with a King that, Harding says, didn't believe that capitalism could meet the needs of poor people, and believed that a kind of socialism was needed.

Because the book is a compilation of essays presented by Harding at different times, some of the material becomes repetitive. The longest and strongest essay, "We Must Keep Going," explores King's evolving beliefs most fully and so contributes the most toward the book's goal of recollecting the forgotten King. Still, the book is not a complete treatment of King's beliefs and commitments, although Harding does point to helpful sources elsewhere.

Mennonites may need reminding of King's commitment to peace, calling all young men to register as conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War. King's opposition to the war cost him much support from those who wanted him to stick to the issue of race.

By recollecting the real King, Harding calls us to a great task, to "truly honor him with audacious, creative thinking and organizing toward that which has never yet existed: a spiritually based, life-giving revolution." King has much left to teach us. This book is a helpful introduction to those lessons.

SECOND HALF OF LIFE

Autumn Gospel *by Kathleen Fischer (Paulist Press, 1995, 185 pages)*

Reviewed by Carol Schrag, Newton, Kan.

In *Autumn Gospel* Kathleen Fischer gathers from her own as well as other women's life experiences to address issues of women in the second half of their lives.

Women are encouraged to create new potentials and definitions for themselves that alter the stereotype they have received from personal experience, societal influence and the media.

Fischer outlines methods of tending to the inner life, including solitude, meditative reading, dream work, journaling and group support.

She calls for grace and courage during the transitional times in a woman's life, when a woman generally fears the unknown and longs to cling tightly to the present.

Fischer asks the reader to honor the body as sacred, and deals with reclaiming sexuality and intimacy, the body in prayer, and bodily resurrection.

Mourning what we are accustomed to is a natural process that includes feeling shock and disbelief, falling apart and connecting again.

The chapter on remembrance and redemption is especially intriguing, as it deals with viewing ourselves with compassion, forgiving ourselves and others (and what that process involves), claiming the events of our lives as well as directing our attention to the future.

The importance of knowing how to gracefully give and receive care is addressed with tenderness. And finally the author emphasizes the legacy we as women leave for those who follow.

FRIESLAND TO GDANSK

A Special Menno Simons 500th Anniversary Eastward Tour

(Amsterdam, Friesland, Hamburg,
Bad Oldesloe, Gdansk and Berlin)

July 15 - 26, 1996 **Leader: John L. Ruth**

All our 1996 European tours feature this special 500th anniversary.

Menno Simons 500th Anniversary Tour .... June 10 - 26
European Fall Harvest .... September 26 - October 11

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

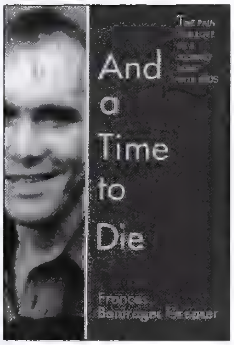
At the end of each chapter are prayers, blessings and rituals the reader can use.

Parts of this book tend toward a liberal slant, but most thoughts portrayed will help with the basic concept, helping women live life gracefully and with vision.

JOURNEY WITH AIDS

And a Time to Die: The Pain and Love of a Journey Home With AIDS *by Frances Bontrager Greaser (Herald Press, 1995, 157 pages)*

Reviewed by Ann Showalter, Denver



And a Time to Die is a story of suffering, acceptance, faith and grace. The excruciating physical suffering of AIDS is matched by deep emotional and spiritual suffering. It's a story of an outpouring of love by the community of faith that far exceeded the family's imagination.

From first page to last, Greaser invites the reader to glimpse what it means to care for a son as he travels the final stretch of his journey through AIDS. It is a journey through rough terrain. From the unpredictability of the disease process to probing questions of faith, David and his family traverse it all.

The book makes me ask how faith can be defined. Must faith be articulated in our accustomed language and lived faithfully? Or is faith also what is lived but not couched in familiar language? The book gives witness to David's gentleness, love, generosity, compassion and patience (it reads like fruits of the Spirit), even though he found it difficult if not impossible to use the language of faith learned early in life.

I recommend the book to anyone willing to be challenged to be compassionate even in the most demanding circumstances, whether or not you agree with how the person lives.

One incident gave me special sadness. David wanted to pay for a catered dinner that would take place at his parents' church after his burial. It was to be his gift of appreciation. He was told that the church would gather for a potluck. It is understandable that near the end of months of stress the family might not have thought what giving something back to the community could have meant for both David and the church. I fear that sometimes in our preoccupation with giving we deny others the same opportunity. How sad.

SIMPLICITY

Simplicity: Notes, Stories and Exercises for Developing Unimaginable Wealth *by March A. Burch (New Society Publishers, 1995, 130 pages)*

Reviewed by David Janzen, Evanston, Ill.

Simplicity is a Mennonite virtue, perhaps more in reputation than in reality. We try to build our "simple life" from many sources. Some of us can still remember a rural past with plenty of hard work, a slower pace and an enjoyment of nature often missing in our urban and professional existence. Through voluntary service some of us have seen up close the connection between overconsumption here and poverty in the sweatshops and plantations of the Third World. We have begun to take retreats and read contemplative saints to find fulfillment in spiritual growth rather than in further accumulation of possessions. "More with less" describes our recipes and our consciences, if not always how we eat or spend our money. This book will reinforce all these motives for simple living.

I think a serious Christian will find this book instructive, empowering and also frustrating. The values, stories and analyses are familiar. "Voluntary simplicity offers a personal way of reducing stresses arising from lifestyles that have become too complex to be healthy or fulfilling." The author hopes to catch Americans' attention, as the subtitle suggests, by linking the un-American virtue of simplicity with the American fascination with wealth. The wealth he proposes is in making more free time for "family, friends and learning," through activities that move us toward global equity and a sustainable ecology in a socially fulfilling lifestyle.

This book is most unique in the practical and imaginative exercises he develops for individuals and groups. Examples: Make a budget to live on 75 percent of your current income; write a letter for your great-great-grandchild to read in the year 2100; what would a world with a sustainable economy look like? These exercises are especially designed to engage our imaginations. As the author says, "I am informed by facts but I am moved by images."

Interesting and useful as this book is, I find it hollow at the center because it is linked to no faith or community. Aimed at a secular audience, it honors all spiritual traditions, but seems to be rooted in none. Read this book to be informed, but to be moved, get something like Joetta Handrich-Schlabach's cookbook *Extending the Table*, which points to a Savior whose life defines "simplicity" and introduces you to an international people already trying to live it.

Resources

- **Living Mirror: Young Mennonite Writers**, a 1995 collection of short fiction and poetry written by writers ages 8 to 18, is available for $5 U.S. from Mennonite Arts Weekend, c/o Suzanne Marie Hitt, 3981 Woodridge Blvd., Apt. 10, Fairfield, OH 45014-7570. A 1994 collection, **Living Mirror: Young Mennonite Poets**, is available for $3.50 U.S.; the pair can be purchased for $6 U.S. Proceeds support the Mennonite Arts Weekend.
- **Songs of Earth, Echoes of Heaven** is a recording of folksongs and spirituals by Canadian tenor Ben Heppner and the West Coast Mennonite Chamber Choir to benefit Mennonite Central Committee projects and celebrate MCC's 75th anniversary. To order call 1-800-622-5455, or write MCC Supportive Care Services, P.O. Box 2460, Abbotsford, BC V2T 4X3; e-mail MCCSCS@uniserve.com. CDs are $18.98 Cdn., audiocassettes $13.98 Cdn. plus any applicable taxes.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 498
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

The work of belief: letting go

As my neighbors and co-workers begin the annual planting of flowers and gardens, this spring finds me packing bags, preparing to move. And with the church celebrating new life at Easter, I find myself in the process of giving up much of what has been my life: setting aside a familiar job, good friends and places that have come to feel like home.

In her meditation on Jesus' hands (pages 6-7), Laura Sportack considers how meditation on Christ can transform us into closer expressions of the nonviolent Christ. She quotes John, who tells us, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (6:29).

Preparing to move is teaching me about the work involved in believing. Often we think of belief as a light switch, a choice we make—on or off, believe or disbelieve. John's words suggest that belief does not happen in a moment of decision. It is a work, a labor to be undertaken.

> *The trouble with the leap of faith is always that we must give up what we have before we can realize the new.*

Belief, like moving, is a long process. It involves sorting parts of ourselves, deciding what we need and don't need, what is helpful and what is dead weight.

Belief is work, but it is not solely our work. We can falter in belief when we try to flip the switch, to convince ourselves into belief. Belief is a gift of grace. We cannot convince ourselves to believe in God. Rather, belief is the gift God brings to us when we see God's love at work in the world and in our lives.

But there is labor in belief. That work is the process of unburdening ourselves of the barriers we create to protect ourselves from grace. And that is a lifelong task.

In the last 3 1/2 years here at *The Mennonite*, I have developed close friendships and comfortable, reliable patterns of living. My stable community and stable income have in many ways provided a greenhouse environment for spiritual growth.

But any good gift can become a burden. How easily I can come to depend on these supports, to fear losing their security more than to fear losing the spiritual growth that they made possible. The spiritual life is a continual process of giving up supports, of accepting change.

Giving up securities is not easy. In the past months of preparation, voices of anxiety have welled up in me. Where will I work? Where will I live? Who will befriend and care for me? Will I wish I had never left?

In the wings: I expected the anxieties when I made the decision to move. What I did not expect was the accompanying burst of energy. As the time draws closer for me to leave, I have felt the anxieties diminish and a new sense of peace that the future is in the hands of someone much more capable than I to manage it. And as I let go of trusted securities I have felt new joy and enthusiasm for the future. I don't know what waits for me, but I can feel the presence of new possibilities waiting in the wings. The trouble with the leap of faith is always that we must give up what we have before we can realize the new. My joy in the future did not come until after I faced and accepted the anxieties of giving up what I had and accepting its loss.

This issue's news section reports on the Council of Commissions, the annual meetings of the boards that determine the future course of the General Conference Mennonite Church. If you read the reports, you will see what has become a familiar refrain at church meetings in recent years. The church is at a crossroads. The church is losing support. The church cannot continue as it has.

The reports also tell of possible new directions. A new general secretary will come this summer with the possibility of new ideas for leadership. Integration with the Mennonite Church promises new projects and new dreams of working together, although there are still voices that want to hold on to established patterns rather than give up that security for an unknown new church.

The task of giving up control is no easier for institutions than it is for individuals. But it is the paradox of faith that we are continually called to give up our security, to lose our life to save it. That is the work of believing. In our corporate and personal lives, let's take up the task. *Larry Penner*

Recyclable

$2.00

Inside

Why I believe in conference / p. 10

Teach a child to pray / p. 11

Give the Holy Spirit more credence / p. 12

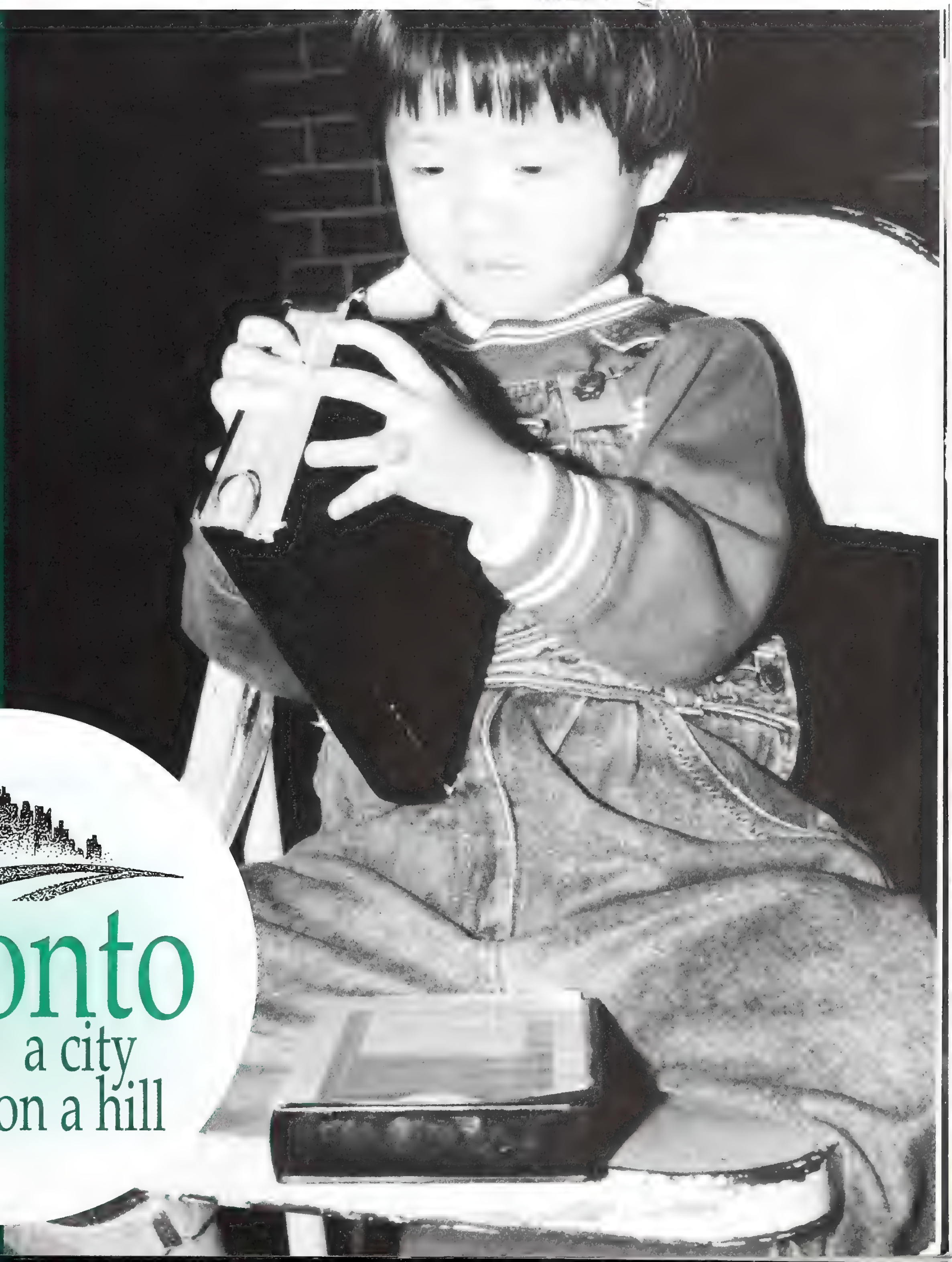
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 08
APRIL 23, 1996

MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
'96
ELKHART
LIBRARY

- Faithful despite financial hardship (page 4)
- Do God's work regardless of risks (page 6)
- Reaching out to a 'lost generation' (page 8)



Toronto a city on a hill

Prologue

The biblical image of a city on a hill (Matthew 5:14) became more vivid for me when I was in Israel a year ago. In the hilly areas of the West Bank I often saw villages or towns on top of the hills. To paraphrase Jesus, "You can't miss them."

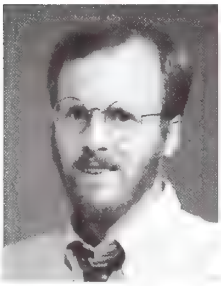
The congregations we look at in this issue are not trying to hide themselves. Instead they want to make themselves visible and available to people—particularly to Asian immigrants—in the greater Toronto area. The leaders of these congregations have made sacrifices in order to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

Money that many of you have given to the Commission on Home Ministries has been used to help the work of these churches. In this and other ways you are part of that work.

Last fall General Conference Mennonite Church news service editor Carla Reimer traveled to Toronto and wrote the stories and took the photos that you see on pages 4-8.

Larry Hauder, conference minister for the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference, tells us why he believes in conference (page 10).

Marlene Kropf offers tips on how to teach children to pray (page 11).



Read about Jeff Wright (page 12), who says his work in Southern California would not be possible without the power of the Holy Spirit.

And learn what the Integration Committee decided at its last meeting. *gh*

Next issue: Baptism

Cover: Photo by Carla Reimer

Contents

FEATURES

3 Toronto: a city on a hill

Asian leaders make sacrifices for their beliefs.

4 Faithful despite financial hardships

5 'We just need time'

6 Do God's work regardless of risks

7 'They had strength inside them'

8 Reaching out to a 'lost generation'

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
10 Speaking out
11 Learning to pray
12 Profile
13 News
19 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www:southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

Asian leaders make sacrifices for their beliefs

Toronto a city on a hill

Carla Reimer

Boris Sithideth worked as a college professor and a United Nations interpreter before he and his wife, Bonnie, were forced to flee Laos because of their Christian faith.

About 40 years ago, Winfred Soong left his university studies in mining and engineering to pursue a seminary education, even though he could have been imprisoned for his actions in Communist China.

Frank and Heather Liao chose not to look for work when they first arrived in Canada because they felt called to plant a Taiwanese-speaking congregation.

All five of them continue to hold firm to their beliefs as they witness to Asian immigrants in the greater Toronto area.

The net result of their efforts is remarkable: The Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church has grown from a handful of participants to a membership of 140. The Taiwanese Christian Revival Church, which started with Bible studies in the Liaos' basement apartment, now holds worship services in a high school. A number of Laotian families attend weekly Bible studies.

Most people who attend these established or emerging Mennonite churches have had little exposure to Christianity. Many, in fact, are from a Buddhist background. They are attracted to the Mennonite church because they feel lonely when they first arrive in Canada. They remain involved because of the compassion they feel from the other members.

The Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church named the Toronto area as its 1995 City on a Hill as a way of recognizing and supporting the work of these Asian churches and other projects. CHM gave a $20,000 (U.S.) grant to the Toronto area churches. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada also contributed money and staff support to the work of these congregations.

Most people who attend these established or emerging Mennonite churches have had little exposure to Christianity. Many, in fact, are from a Buddhist background.

Carla Reimer, who is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, visited Toronto last fall and wrote the articles and took the photos that follow (pages 4-8).

Faithful despite financial hardships

Unlike most immigrants, Frank and Heather Liao were not interested in looking for work through the help wanted ads when they first arrived in Canada in December 1990.

After successfully starting a Taiwanese Mennonite congregation in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Liaos wanted to devote their time to planting another church in Toronto. About 50,000 Taiwanese reside in the greater Toronto area.

Their convictions resulted in a "basic" sort of existence for the couple and their two children, says Heather, as neither of them had any kind of regular financial support during their first years in this country.

At one point, Heather thought perhaps they should be more flexible in their approach. She consequently tried to encourage her husband to find a job as a social worker, a position he had held both in Argentina and Taiwan.

> ***Since they made the effort to get to know people in their homes first, the Liaos were able to attract a number to the Bible study meetings in their basement apartment.***

But Frank was adamant about their call to form a congregation for Taiwanese who had recently immigrated to Canada. "I wanted to work for God. I believed God would help us with everything," he says.

Slowly, but surely, their prayers were answered: A woman offered the Liaos a basement apartment for minimal rent. Others let them borrow their cars so they could visit with Taiwanese immigrants in their homes during the evenings.

Surprisingly, people confided in the Liaos. "Even though they were not Christian, they had respect for the position of pastor; they trusted that I would not tell their secrets," says Frank.

New culture: Traditionally, Taiwanese are not too open about the problems they are facing, he adds. But the adjustments to a new culture bring additional pressures and many immigrants do not know where to go for counsel.

Some had hoped to start a business in Canada, but "they are scared to invest all their money here because of the economic depression," says Frank.

'I've experienced a lot of hard things': *Sophia Su (left) and Grace Hsu*

As a result, the husband may return to work in Taiwan, while the wife remains in Canada in order to provide their children with a better education. The wife worries that the husband may have an affair while they are separated.

Since they made the effort to get to know people in their homes first, the Liaos were able to attract a number to the Bible study meetings in their basement apartment. In October 1994 they held the first worship service of the Taiwanese Christian Revival Church at a Toronto high school. Today about 60 adults and children attend the congregation.

Many are high school or university students. For young adults such as Grace Hsu and Sophia Su, the Taiwanese Christian Revival Church has helped them cope with the loneliness and alienation they have experienced in Canada.

Sophia's father returned to Taiwan one week after she arrived in Toronto, while Grace's parents visit her for periods of three to six months each year. Both women have primary responsibility for caring for their younger siblings, who are high school students in Toronto.

"I've experienced a lot of hard things here. I had so many questions and I didn't know the language," says Sophia, who learned about the church through a friend.

Since her family background is Buddhist, she had some ambivalence about attending Christian services. But she feels her involvement is helping her deal with her daily problems.

For example, she used to relate to her teenage sister the same way her father treated people. "He is always in a hurry and then sometimes he gets mad. Now I have learned how to talk softly instead of yelling. Every night I pray that God will give me the power to educate my sister," she says.

Grace had accepted Christ in Hong Kong but lost her faith when her life became difficult. "My parents were unhappy, and that made me scared. Since I was 11 years old, they argued every day. I didn't have love from my family," she says.

"Sometimes I would be angry at God. I would ask God, Why are my family problems so big?" she says. Her parents are now divorced.

But when she prayed about her problems at the Taiwanese Christian Revival Church, the people there held her and supported her. As a result, she says, "I realized that God is always with me."

Toronto
a city
on a hill

'We just need time'

When Frank Liao preaches for an hour during the Sunday morning worship service of the Taiwanese Christian Revival Church here, he doesn't look down at his sermon notes. That's because there aren't any.

It is not that Frank composes his sermons in his head as he speaks. Rather he chooses to memorize his sermon in order to maintain as much eye contact as possible with the people who are attending this fledgling congregation.

"It helps them focus on what I am saying," he says, noting that many are from a Buddhist background and have had little, if any, exposure to Christianity.

This is also the reason why, when he refers to the Bible during his sermon, he has the congregation read the Scripture passages out loud at the same time. "Then they know these are not my words," he says.

For now Frank is focusing on the basic tents of Christianity. On a Sunday early last October, he talked about the meaning of the name God.

"After they become Christians, I plan to emphasize the Mennonite teachings. If I go too fast with this aspect of the faith, people will become confused," says Frank.

The church sometimes is plagued with internal fighting, he says. Some people may stop attending because they have a conflict with other participants. Or an individual might spread a rumor that the pastor favors certain people.

Still, Frank is confident that the Taiwanese Christian Revival Church will blossom into a mature congregation. "We just need time, patience, confidence and perseverance."

No sermon notes: *Pastor Frank Liao*

Do God's work regardless of risks

Winfred Soong's university friends thought he was crazy when he began visiting a house church in Canton, China, in the early 1950s. Under Communist rule, it was common knowledge that Winfred could face years in a labor camp for this kind of activity.

But Winfred, who is now the pastor of the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, recalls how he was spurred by feelings of curiosity as well as loneliness.

At the first house church meeting he attended, the message struck a chord with Winfred. "The church leaders talked about how each person has a soul. I had always felt that there was a higher standard, that humankind was more than an animal."

When most of the house church leaders were arrested in the mid-1950s, Winfred realized "the depth of their belief in God." As he read the Scriptures, he felt God was calling him to follow in the footsteps of these faithful Christians.

Although his friends tried to convince him to leave his newfound faith, Winfred did not listen. Instead he decided to quit his studies in mining and engineering in order to devote his energy to the work of the church.

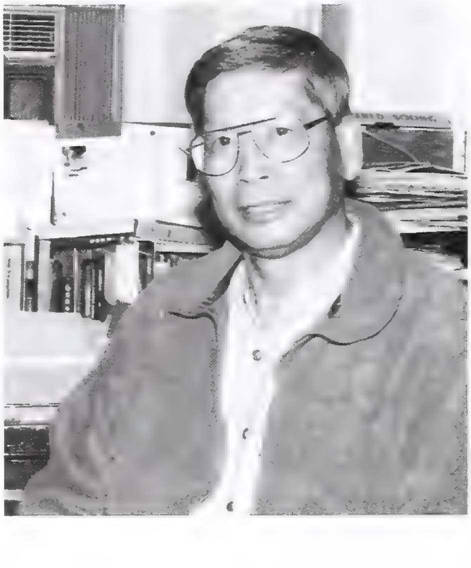
He left China for a short time to look at the possibility of studying at the Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong. When he returned home, he believed "God would light a path" so that he could pursue his dream of a seminary education.

However, in 1956, when a visa officer asked him why he wanted to go to Hong Kong, he couldn't think of a reason that would be acceptable to the Chinese government. Since he could not come up with a reply, Winfred assumed his visa would be denied.

Then one day his neighbor told him that she had seen his name on a list of people who had received their visas. She asked, Why haven't you left for Hong Kong?

Theology: Within 11/2 months, he was on his way to Hong Kong, where he followed through on his plans to study at the Alliance Bible Seminary. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology in 1960. It was as a result of his studies at the seminary that he also met his future wife, Jean.

By 1972, the couple began to worry about how safe they were from the Communists. They both had good jobs—he was an editor at a Christian publishing company and she managed a Christian bookstore.



They immigrated in 1973 to Toronto, where they became active members of a Chinese Baptist church. Winfred found work at a printing plant.

But in spring 1979, Winfred received a phone call from seminary friend Stephen Lee, who was pastor of the Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church.

Stephen explained that he wanted Winfred to become the pastor of the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, since the original pastor had resigned after only a few months on the job.

"I didn't know much about Mennonites. But I thought, Here is a church; it is not good to close it. I had no choice but to say yes," says Winfred. In 1979, he estimates, there were about 70,000 Chinese and 15 Chinese-speaking churches in the greater Toronto area compared with 250,000 Chinese and over 100 Chinese-speaking churches in 1995.

In the beginning, Winfred recalls, he found the responsibilities a bit overwhelming. Only a handful of people attended the church when it first opened in the summer of 1979. "Most

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

"Mennonites offer a good balance of meeting both the physical and spiritual needs."

Winfred Soong

Chinese people are not familiar with the Mennonite denomination. Some may have seen it as a cult," Winfred says.

In order to encourage people to come to the worship service, the church began offering Chinese language classes for children. The classes, which are no longer offered, attracted several new families to the church.

Still, Winfred was afraid the congregation would fail. "I wanted this Mennonite church to be a success," he says. "Mennonites offer a good balance of meeting both the physical and spiritual needs." He feels other Christian groups often do not have a holistic approach to the gospel.

Providentially, he says, in the early 1980s a young couple volunteered to help reach out to youth. At the time only three young people were attending. Within a year, the number grew to 40.

Today about 70 percent of the 140 participants at the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church are high school or university students, says Winfred.

As a result, there is a fairly high rate of turnover, since the students often return to Hong Kong when they are finished with their studies. "Our contact with these students in Canada may actually end up strengthening the Mennonite church in Hong Kong," he says.

Two services: The congregation, which first met at the Danforth Mennonite Church building and now meets in a Presbyterian church building, holds two services—one in Chinese and one in English. The latter is primarily for those members born in Canada; they account for about 30 percent of the congregation.

At an October 1995 Bible study meeting, a number of Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church members shared how their involvement at the church has changed their lives.

Several were first attracted to the congregation because they lived close by. Others had friends who attended.

Hin Hung, who accepted Christ as a result of his involvement with the church, likes the fact that it is a small congregation.

"I used to be shy. I wasn't talkative," says Hin. "Now I am more confident. When I attend a church activity, I am more social. It has provided a good environment for me to grow."

Others such as Tony Lu like the peace emphasis. "A major change for me is that I know how to show love. Before I just was concerned with my future. Now I care about the needs of other people," he says.

"When I see people change and become committed Christians, it encourages me to carry on," says Winfred. "Church planting is God's work."

'They had strength inside them'

When Jean Hung's parents encouraged her to pursue a university education in Canada rather than Hong Kong, they had no idea she would end up as a pastor of a Chinese Mennonite church in Toronto. Neither did Jean, for that matter.

But the 18-year-old was lonely when she first arrived in Canada in 1988. "I was just a kid. I had no friends," she says. In fact, her sister, a student at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, was the only person she knew in Canada.

Therefore, when her sister asked her if she wanted to visit the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, Jean said yes. She quickly found that the congregation was "like a family" to her.

Still, she had some reservations about her decision because she had never regularly attended a church before. She also was worried about what her parents, neither of whom are Christian, would think.

Called to ministry: *Jean Hung*

But the longer Jean attended the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, the more she was struck by values of the people around her. She noticed, for instance, that the young adults chose to gather for singing, prayer and Bible study on Friday nights instead of going to the movies.

"I was curious about why their activities were focused on the church. What motivated them? I wanted to see if their beliefs matched their actions," she says.

Jean found there was indeed an "intimacy" between what the members said and what they did. "The people were kind, happy and full of joy. They had strength inside them," she says.

She soon realized that the love of God was behind the love she saw in her Chinese brothers and sisters. As a result, three months after she started attending the congregation, she decided to accept Jesus into her life.

Not long after, Jean felt called to enter full-time ministry. She recounted how she saw an image in her mind of Jesus calling Peter to be his disciple. "A the time, I ignored it. I was just a teenager and it seemed like too big a commitment," she says. But she continued to be involved in the church.

In September 1991, while she was studying history and East Asian studies at York University in Toronto, Jean and nine other members agreed to help the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church plant another congregation in nearby Markham.

Her consequent studies at the Ontario Theological Seminary, Toronto, led to her current role as the part-time assistant pastor of the Markham Chinese Mennonite Church. The congregation has an average attendance of about 45 children and adults. It has a partnership with, and meets at the building of, Hagerman Mennonite Church.

Jean observes that her understanding of what it means to be a disciple isn't for everyone. She says her husband, Hin, is also committed to the church, even though he works as a computer graphics designer. Jean says, "I felt that being a pastor was the best way for me to be a servant of God."

Reaching out to a 'lost generation'

They are what Boris and Bonnie Sithideth call "the lost generation"—those who fled Laos after the Communists took control in 1975. Living in refugee camps in Thailand for periods as long as six years, many Laotian refugees lost their chance for a decent education, a normal life.

The Sithideths know from personal experience what the camps were like. In July 1979, they too had to leave Laos because they feared imprisonment or worse due to their Christian beliefs.

"The conditions in the camp were terrible. We had 22 people living in a small space. The walls were bamboo. The roof was made out of hay," says Boris. "Once a week we would receive our portion of food, which usually consisted of two to three fish and rice."

Their faith in God carried them through their time in the camp. "We prayed to God and tried to think of the Bible first. Sometimes we lost hope, but then we would read Psalm 139," says Bonnie.

"Before the Communists came, we felt secure in our faith. We had a comfortable life," says Boris. He had worked as a college professor, vice principal and a United Nations interpreter in Laos.

"But after the Communists came and we had to leave Laos, everything changed," he says. "We realized that we can't have faith in human existence. We became closer to God because we needed God more."

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the Laotian refugees ended up immigrating to other countries such as Canada. The Sithideths were among the fortunate ones. They arrived in Vancouver in November 1979.

In British Columbia, they learned to know about Mennonites for the first time. They noted that Mennonites were among those sponsoring Laotian refugees.

The couple was invited to work with the St. Catharines (Ont.) Laotian Mennonite Church in July 1991. By August 1994, they decided that the congregation was mature enough to find its own leadership and, consequently, moved to Mississauga, Ont., to start a Mennonite church-planting project there. They have a partner relationship with the Mississauga Mennonite Fellowship.

Today the Sithideths lead Bible study groups in three different parts of the greater Toronto area, which has a population of about 10,000 Laotians.

Most of the families who participate are from a Buddhist background. "We teach them how to be a new people. We emphasize John 3:16," says Bonnie, noting that some attend because they are tired of the drinking that occurs in their communities.

"God brings them to us. Many people are worried about the future," Bonnie says. "We give them peace of mind."

"God brings them to us. Many people are worried about the future. We give them peace of mind."

Boris and Bonnie Sithideth

Letters

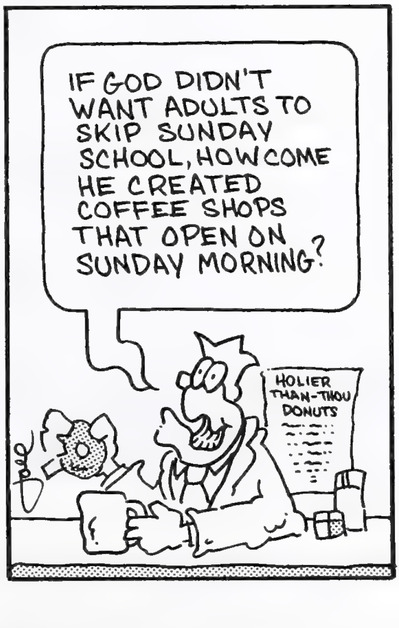
RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

I just finished reading the March 12 issue of *The Mennonite* and found it helpful and thought-provoking. The article by Arthur Boers (page 3) expressed well the complexities of walking between polarities of religious extremism. It is not an easy time to be a leader in the church. The voice of moderation and reason is often drowned out by louder voices calling leaders to make a choice. I'm not convinced the choices we're asked to choose between are all that clear. *Larry Hauder, Boise, Idaho*

Ideas your church can try

First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, gave opportunity and encouragement for people to tell their faith stories during an intergenerational Sunday school hour during the summer. The church asked people to talk for 20-30 minutes each about how they have sensed God's presence in their lives or about particular events of significance in their faith journeys.

Pontius' Puddle


IF GOD DIDN'T WANT ADULTS TO SKIP SUNDAY SCHOOL, HOW COME HE CREATED COFFEE SHOPS THAT OPEN ON SUNDAY MORNING?
HOLIER THAN-THOU DONUTS

© Joel Kauffmann

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

WHAT WE HAVE, THEY WANT

N'Dorola, Burkina Faso—Our most exciting news is that a few of the Nanerige men we have come to know have decided to "change religions." They don't understand a whole lot about our faith yet, but they've decided that what we have, they want.

Issouf, whom we know the best, has been spending a lot of time reading Phil's French Bible. Pray that the Holy Spirit gives him understanding as he reads God's Word in a language that is not his first language, or even his second. Help us make it clear that becoming a Christian means believing that Jesus paid the price for our sin and that through Jesus we can enter into fellowship with God.

Changing religions around here often means switching from one set of rules to another, from one merit system to another. Two of our co-workers have been making progress in translation, but it will still be years before there will be enough Scripture translated to give a clear and complete gospel message in Nanerige. *Carol and Phil Bergen, Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission workers*

THANKS FOR THE AID

Members of the evangelical Mennonite community of Zaporozhye, Ukraine, with pastor Peter Kehler and chair Vladimir Thiessen, express their thanks to you and all the people engaged in gathering, packing and sending humanitarian help to Zaporozhye. All the goods—clothes and footwear for children and adults, blankets and linen for newborns—were distributed among the members of the community and other people in need. The process of distribution was organized and carried out by Thiessen, pastor Kehler and his wife, Susan, and members of the church: Heinrich Wiens, Liesa Samjativa and Alexandra Penner.

Thank you for your kindness and concern for the people's well-being. May God reward you for your goodness. *On behalf of the members of the community, Vladimir Thiessen*

From left to right: Vladimir Thiessen, Peter Kehler, Alexandra Penner, Heinrich Wiens, Liesa Samjativa

Speaking out

Why I believe in conference

We need bridges that connect local congregations, says a conference minister.

Larry Hauder

Being conference minister has not been especially enjoyable. I'm called most often when there is trouble in a congregation. Many times people are a bit cantankerous during times of stress, which is when I get to see them.

Pastors need pastoring, but some make it easier than others. Serving as an apologist for the broader church is hard work. Traveling over three states can get tiresome; the third time past a scenic view and another night in an unfamiliar bed have lost any glamor they may have had. This is not an especially good time for denominational and conference work. Criticizing denominational institutions has been popular in recent years.

So why do I invest in conference? Because I believe there is tremendous value in it. I feel called by God and the church to work in this ministry at this time. What more could I ask for than to feel a divine calling and to see value in what I am doing? I sometimes see myself like Jeremiah, who chose to buy land in a war zone. He saw potential where and when many others did not.

My belief in the importance of conference flies in the face of current thinking among many Christians. It's more popular now to be an "independent" than a denominationally affiliated church. Some churches believe the word "Mennonite" is an obstacle to church growth. Others think ecumenical relationships are more important than denominational covenants. Just as many people find it difficult to commit to regular attendance at a local church, so churches also find it easier to live alone, unencumbered by denominational attachments.

> ***My belief in the importance of conference flies in the face of current thinking among many Christians. It's more popular now to be an "independent" than a denominationally affiliated church.***

Promise Keepers: The enemy has changed. Churches are no longer aligned against Roman Catholics and Communists. New stigmatizing labels like homosexual, pro-life, New Age, liberal and fundamentalist pit churches against each other rather than against the real enemy. And parachurch organizations like Promise Keepers, Gideons, Youth With a Mission and Focus on the Family have captured the imagination of the church, often at the expense of denominational covenants. It's often easier to accept the inconsistencies of neighbors than it is of family members.

Even with all the difficulties, I believe in conference more strongly now than ever before. Our conference exists to help protect and provide for local congregations. There is spiritual safety and strength in numbers. Churches need each other. One cannot read the New Testament without seeing the bridge between churches, where ideas, theology and discernment flowed back and forth. This relationship between churches helped guard against theological legalism (Acts 15:5). Leadership personnel flowed between congregations but not without discernment and recommendations (Romans 16:1). Disputes arose (1 Corinthians 1:11), and the church received advice from outside leadership. Mission vision flowed from church to church (Romans 15:27-28). New Testament churches were in covenant relationship with each other.

Acts 15 tells of the first conference of churches. Verse 12 says, "The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Paul and Silas." This little-known text is often hidden behind a more prominent verse in Acts 15:7, "after much debate." I am increasingly convinced that listening, not debating, will help churches come to consensus regarding their life together. Listening to stories of God's mighty works, as was done at this first conference, will continue to help our conference build necessary bridges of trust and accommodation so necessary for a healthy conference.

Larry Hauder, Boise, Idaho, is conference minister for Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. This article is based on a talk he gave.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

preacher of the faith

Menno Wiebe

in front of the people
I sought to understand
the hungry quest for truth
flickering in the eyes
of all the gathered ones

they were looking forward
in the hope
of finding meaning
for their daily life

I wondered
as I spoke
whether words
sweated out in prayerful quest
would transcend the status
of the pulpit perch
and carry God's own Spirit
to the people of the Jesus faith
in this worship hour

Menno Wiebe is Native Concerns director for Mennonite Central Committee Canada in Winnipeg.

Learning to pray

Teach a child to pray

Six ways we can teach our children to pray

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

A recent series in our local newspaper recounted stories of children's experiences of God. In one story, which took place in a poor and violent city, a 10-year-old latchkey child told of hearing God speak to him each time he opens the door to his house after school: "You don't have to be scared. Nothing's going to happen to you."

This story reveals the capacity of children to be aware of God's presence, to relate to God, and to speak and listen to God in prayer. If anyone doubts the validity of such communion, the story of the child Samuel in 1 Samuel 3 supports the reality that God indeed speaks to children and can be known and understood by them.

Parents, grandparents and teachers are sometimes puzzled, however, when the time comes to teach children to pray. What are the best ways to introduce children to God? How can they create an environment in which prayer is a normal part of everyday life?

Become praying parents: Without a doubt the most important way we teach children to pray is by becoming people of prayer ourselves. Parents or teachers who lead meaningful mealtime prayers or who pray a prayer of blessing for a child provide a model for prayer. By using ordinary language and speaking to God about immediate concerns, they teach children that God is approachable and cares about what happens to us.

Bedtime prayers: The tried and true prayer ritual for children is a bedtime prayer. Once when I spent a week in a Mennonite high school, I interviewed students about their prayer practices. Nearly all the teenagers told me that they still pray a bedtime prayer just before falling asleep. The habit they learned as small children is so powerful that it remains a fixed part of their daily routine.

Teaching a 3- or 4-year-old to memorize a prayer is a good way to begin. Before long, though, children should be encouraged to speak their own words to God. For example, a parent can guide a child's prayer by suggesting: What good things happened to you today? Let's thank God for them (then leave a space for the child's prayers). Did anything sad happen today? Do you want to talk to God about it? (Again leave space for prayer.) Do you want to pray for anyone tonight—grandparents, cousins, friends, pastor, teacher? Or for anything that is happening in the world?

> ***The most important way we teach children to pray is by becoming people of prayer ourselves.***

Listening to God: Though speaking to God is important, children also need to be taught how to listen to God. After they hear a Bible story, children may be asked, What do you think God is telling you in this story? When adults take a child for a walk in the woods or along a river, they can encourage children to recognize God's presence in the beauty and diversity of the natural world. Children may also be introduced to the peacefulness of meeting God in silence.

Praying with the body: Because children learn through their senses, they will pray best if their bodies are involved in prayer. Very young children can be taught simple hand movements to accompany a bedtime prayer. Older children can experiment with various postures for prayer and even learn to dance with prayer.

The small group of which I am a part always ends our weekly gathering with the Lord's Prayer. We stand in a circle, hands joined, and pray together using a set of movements we have learned. Each week the 1-year-old who plays at our feet during the meeting comes to join us during the Lord's Prayer. He stands in the middle of the circle and watches intently while we pray. I believe he is also learning to pray.

Singing a prayer: One of the easiest modes of prayer is singing. Children can sing a mealtime prayer or a bedtime prayer and also learn to participate in intercessory prayer by singing a response. For example, they can learn the simple refrain, "Lord, hear our prayer" (number 380 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*).

Unanswered prayer: The most difficult part of teaching children to pray is dealing with the question of unanswered prayer. We will help our children with this thorny issue if we teach them that prayer is much more than petition. Prayer is primarily a relationship with God—a way for us to love God and to know God's love. God is like a caring parent or grandparent who always welcomes our prayers. But because we are always children in God's sight, we must trust God to know and do what is best.

Books about prayer

Two books that offer guidance for teaching children to pray are

- *Teaching Prayer in the Classroom: Experiences for Children and Youth* by Delia Halverson (Abingdon, 1988)
- *Finding God at Home: Family Life as Spiritual Discipline* by Ernest Boyer Jr. (Harper & Row, 1988)

Profile

Let's give the Holy Spirit more credence

Jeff Wright can't leave 'the greatest job on the planet.'

Carla Reimer

Jeff Wright has been trying to leave Southern California for the last 10 years. But so far, he hasn't had much success.

"Whenever it comes to making a decision, a small voice inside me asks, Why would you want to leave the greatest job on the planet?" he says with a grin as he zips from one lane to another on a busy freeway near Los Angeles.

"The greatest job on the planet" actually is a combination of two part-time jobs—area minister for Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference (PSMC) and director of ministry development for the Center of Anabaptist Leadership (CAL).

In his work with PSMC, Jeff relates to 23 congregations in Southern California. He helps with the pastoral search process, provides resources and support to pastors and their families and serves as a link to PSMC as well as the denominational conferences.

At CAL, Jeff works as a consultant in the areas of church-based community development, church planting and renewal, and grassroots theological education. CAL is a mission resource agency that relates to 60 Anabaptist churches in the Los Angeles area.

It's not that either of his two jobs is easy. "The urban setting makes for hard, slogging work," he says. For example, he drives between 500 and 750 miles each week in order to stay in touch with what is happening at the congregational level.

"There are no megachurches here. Our largest church has less than 200 members," he says. The diversity of the churches in Southern California means he relates to about 10 distinct cultural groups, from African-American to Hispanic to Indonesian.

But these kinds of challenges haven't made Jeff feel the least bit discouraged. Instead, he says, they have transformed his understanding of faith.

"Many Mennonites still feel they will be saved because of their hard work. When I first came to Southern California, I also thought the true test of faithfulness was through doing good works," he says.

Carla Reimer

"Many Mennonites still feel they will be saved because of their hard work."

Jeff Wright

Couldn't take credit: But the longer he stayed here, the more he realized he needed to give more credence to the work of the Holy Spirit. "The people who live here are resilient, but that isn't enough," he says. "There were things happening that we couldn't take credit for."

Jeff recalls how one time, when he asked God to help CAL meet its financial obligations, he received a letter with a check for $14,000 the next day. "It sounds so trite when I tell it. But when you pray, things happen," he says.

There have been other signs of the Holy Spirit's work. A Hispanic congregation in North Hollywood, for example, is growing even though it has moved to 17 different locations during its 15 years of existence.

"God is our salvation. God delivers," he says. "Without an understanding of the Holy Spirit, we all might as well pack up and move."

How to listen to the Holy Spirit

Jeff Wright uses the following principles to help him acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit in his work:

1. An understanding that God was at work in the city before I arrived here and will continue to work here long after I leave;
2. A basic commitment to prayer and personal and corporate worship, which precede and bathe my work;
3. A recognition that a holistic gospel has at least the following components: evangelism, liberation, deliverance and justice ("It seems almost silly to say the Holy Spirit is involved in justice when these kinds of ministries are second nature to Mennonites," Jeff says. "But to know when, how and to whom to speak about justice is a gift from the Spirit.");
4. A commitment to openness, flexibility and tolerance as well as an assumption of love rather than justice as the guiding principle of relationships. *Carla Reimer*

News

• • • ▼

Committee suggests name for new church

Chicago—"Mennonite Church North America." That is the name being proposed by the Integration Committee for the new denomination to rise out of the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC).

The Integration Committee seemed surprised at how soon they came to agreement. It took less than a half hour of a 48-hour meeting held here March 23-25 to agree on a name.

The committee's recommendation goes to the general boards of both denominations for processing. Delegates to business assemblies of both groups will have the final vote.

If discussion of a name took only a half hour, structures for the new denomination took much of the rest of the time. After a worship service on Sunday morning, the committee put aside a 27-item agenda and asked each of its 11 members to give their vision for how a new denomination might be structured.

Three possible models emerged. One calls for a strong general board, which would hire staff to head program work, with oversight by reference councils. Both staff and councils would fluctuate based on the current needs.

A second model is a regional approach, in which the church's work would be coordinated out of several centers throughout North America. While their primary focus would be mission, regional centers would also take care of other work, such as congregational resources and Christian education.

"Vision: Healing and Hope," adopted by both MCs and GCs at Wichita '95, is the focus for a third model. It calls for a general board, which would oversee three program councils: one each for nurture and spiritual development, community, and mission.

The committee agreed to attempt to make a decision on structure at its next meeting in October.

The Canadian question: Throughout the discussion of structures, committee members continued to ask, Will the new denomination be an amalgamation of separate Canadian and U.S. entities, or will it be one North American organization with perhaps separate national conferences?

Integration Committee members agreed they favored one North American body. The question then focused on how best to take care of country agenda. While a Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) already exists, there is no comparable organization of Mennonite area conferences in the United States.

Committee members from the United States agreed that most Mennonites south of the 49th parallel don't see the need for a separate organization. "So, crassly stated, we have a Canadian conference that doesn't want to stop operating and a U.S. conference that doesn't want to be created," said Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio, committee co-chair.

> **"We still don't feel like we are colleagues around the table. But when we have to fight for that, we get a bad name."**
>
> ***Helmut Harder***

Canadian members on the committee said they were more concerned about having an equal voice in the new denomination than they were that the United States have a comparable structure. "We could live with that if we were assured that when there are items that relate only to the U.S., there will be a separate caucus of U.S. delegates at assemblies and during board meetings," said Mary Burkholder, Kitchener, Ont.

"There's a lot of scuttlebutt around on this question," said Helmut Harder, Winnipeg, CMC general secretary. "But Canadian Mennonites are adamant that we have to settle this question. We still don't feel like we are colleagues around the table. But when we have to fight for that, we get a bad name."

Canadian members pointed out that in recent discussions about integrating voluntary service, no one had been present from their country. (The Mennonite Voluntary Service staff

Inside the news

U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines / p. 14

The staggering cost of landmines / p. 15

Why not support self-destruct landmines? / p. 16

FLP cuts staff / p. 17

Abuse victim speaks out / p. 17

Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition? / p. 18

Mennonite Men, which is part of the General Conference Mennonite Church, adopted a 1996 budget of $24,655 U.S. at the Council of Commissions held in Newton, Kan., March 8-12. MM also approved a Tenth Man grant of $50,000 U.S. for Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora, Colo., in 1996, and set a goal to increase Tenth Man membership to over 500 by the end of the year.

• • •

Women in Mission, which is part of the General Conference Mennonite Church, adopted a 1996 budget of $161,000 U.S. at the Council of Commissions held in Newton, Kan., March 8-12. WM received 89.2 percent of its $181,500 U.S. budget in 1995. "We decided to set our budget at $20,000 less this year. We respect the shifting of women's priorities away from heavy, binational programming to regional programming," said WM coordinator Susan Jantzen. WM also discussed integration and how women can serve as resources for each other.

Delegates to the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba meetings, held Feb. 23-24 in Winnipeg, heard news of a more than $80,000 Cdn. operating surplus, even though contributions from churches were down slightly. The conference achieved the surplus through spending cuts. Conference delegates also approved the concept of a new Canadian church publication, adopted a statement on the relationship between the conference and the churches, and installed Sig Polle as conference minister. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba welcomed two churches into membership: Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Rainy River, Ont. Conference bylaws needed to be changed in the case of Good Shepherd, as previously only Manitoba churches were allowed to join the conference. The church, located in northwest Ontario, felt distanced from the other Mennonite churches in its area and wanted to fellowship with the Manitoba churches. One church, Halbstadt Bergthaler Mennonite Church, withdrew its membership from the conference, citing three reasons: They have become independent, they feel that Manitoba has a liberal doctrine, and they feel they didn't have a voice in the conference. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

"Crossing the Generations" was the theme for the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta annual meeting, held Feb. 23-25 in Coaldale, where attenders discussed ways to cross generational barriers. Delegates decided to hire a conference minister and youth minister together with the Northwest Mennonite Conference (of the Mennonite Church). Delegates also voted to discontinue funding support for Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. The conference's 1996 budget of $287,114 Cdn. was approved. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

person from the Winnipeg office, however, was there.) The same was true in early discussions of merging ministerial leadership offices.

MCs ask if they are merging with one group or two, several noted. They urged GCs to clarify the question.

"I'm not buying the idea that the Canadian question is a GC problem," said Harder. "CMC is an integrated organization. Our largest conference is Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, which is made up more of former MCs. The Canadian question is also an MC problem."

Committee members agreed to find a consultant to help them resolve this issue as well as determine what structures the new church should have. John C. Murray said to Harder, "If CMC is at the table, then it is on the table." Harder agreed.

During the meeting the Integration Committee also fielded several questions and directives from MC program boards and GC commissions. Expressing some surprise at the speed with which integration discussions were happening, they decided to request that the general boards provide the Integration Committee with more staff time so that they can more adequately "guide and monitor the integration process," the mandate given them by the Wichita '95 delegates.

The committee gave a favorable nod to the idea of creating regional mission centers throughout North America to work on both home and overseas outreach. They urged current mission agencies to continue discussions already begun about these centers.

One magazine: The committee also said it favors one publication, with country editions produced out of two editorial offices. They said they favor the editor being located in Canada and making subsidy available so that the periodical have as wide a circulation as possible in the first several years of the new church.

Throughout the meeting committee members reminded each other that integration was hard work. "What impresses me is the complexity of the agenda," said Harder. "To try to take people seriously when you can't quite find the target is a real challenge."

Lindsey Robinson, Harrisburg, Pa., likened the work to eating an elephant. "You just have to do it one bite at a time," he said.

The committee recognized Vern Preheim, Newton, Kan., for his six years of work with both the Integration Exploration Committee and the Integration Committee. This was the last meeting for Preheim, who steps down as GC general secretary in August. *J. Lorne Peachey*

U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines

Washington and Ottawa (MCC)—Both the United States and Canada took important steps in January toward a world free of landmines. Now Mennonite Central Committee is asking constituents to write letters expressing support for the measures their countries have taken and to press for an international landmine ban.

Amid turmoil over the government shutdown and efforts to balance the budget, a significant but largely unnoticed event occurred in the United States. On Jan. 26 President Clinton signed into law a one-year moratorium on the use of anti-personnel landmines by U.S. forces. The bill was championed by Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont and Rep. Lane Evans of Illinois.

This moratorium is a remarkable achievement because existing classes of weapons are rarely prohibited. On the U.S. Senate floor, Sen. Leahy declared, "This amendment represents a dramatic shift in the policy of the U.S. government, from one that has lagged behind several of our NATO allies to one that aims to exert U.S. leadership to build international support for ridding the world of these inhumane weapons."

The U.S. moratorium will take effect in 1999. The bill also extends the moratorium on U.S. exports of anti-personnel landmines another year.

The Canadian government also took a step forward. On Jan. 17 the Foreign Affairs and Defence ministers declared a "comprehensive unilateral moratorium on the production, export and operational use of anti-personnel landmines." Canada does not currently produce, export or use anti-personnel mines, but until now this had been merely a matter of practice and not official government policy. This moratorium is an important step; however, it is not reinforced by legislation, nor does it represent a change in Canadian military doctrine.

© Peter Williams/WCC

Still victims of war: *Young mine victim tries a new artificial leg at the Wat Than rehabilitation center in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.*

U.S. citizens: Send letters to President Clinton asking him to seek at the United Nations a complete international ban on anti-personnel landmines. Letters should express support for the Leahy/Evans landmine moratorium law and urge the President to adopt this as the U.S. position at the U.N. Final Review Conference in Geneva, April 23-May 3. President Clinton should be reminded of his clear statement, made in September 1994, in favor of an eventual ban on all anti-personnel landmines.

Canadian citizens: Send letters to Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs; to David Collenette, Minister of National Defence or to your Member of Parliament. Commend the ministers for issuing a moratorium on landmines but ask them to also work toward a legislated landmines ban in Canada that would make what is now a policy statement issued by one government into a law that could not easily be reversed as political tides change. Ask the government to work for a ban on landmines at the U.N. Final Review Conference and in other international forums.

Bomb clearing in Laos: Letters could also mention the experience of North American Mennonites who, through MCC, have worked to clear bombs and other unexploded ordnance in Laos. Some Canadian government funds have gone toward MCC's work there. The threat of landmines—and the methods used to remove them—are similar to unexploded, 30-year-old cluster bombs that maim and kill in Laos. Unexploded cluster bombs and landmines both can lie dormant for years and explode at the slightest touch. Their victims are often children and other civilians.

Planted landmines pose a staggering legacy: at least 100 million unexploded mines are scattered around the world. These can remain lethal for 50 years or more.

A broad-based, international effort is under way to ban landmines in the same manner that chemical and

The staggering cost of landmines

Washington—Without a complete ban on landmines—their production, sale and use—clearance is a hopeless task. In 1993, 100,000 landmines were cleared at a cost of $70 million U.S. ($96 million Cdn.), but 2 million more mines were planted in that same year. The average cost of a new mine is $5 U.S. ($7 Cdn.). Safely clearing one mine costs about $700 U.S. ($966 Cdn.).

Worldwide some 26,000 people each year are killed or maimed by landmines. Usually victims are farmers tilling their fields, women gathering firewood or carrying water, and children working or at play.

Anti-personnel landmines are designed to blast shrapnel into a body, tearing apart an arm or leg, often requiring amputation. Sometimes victims are killed. Landmines don't discriminate between soldiers and civilians. They explode when a vehicle, soldier, young woman or child hits a trigger point and activates the blast.

The cost to society is staggering. Landmines remove large tracts of land from productive use and compound the problem of building peace and reconciliation when warfare ends, such as in Cambodia and Mozambique. In Bosnia and Croatia, there are 3 to 6 million landmines that will cost at least $400 million U.S. ($552 million Cdn.) to remove. *Byron Peachey*

An ecumenical church meeting will take place in June in Erfurt, Germany. It will be the first large meeting of the German churches since the reunification of Germany. The topic of the meeting will be reconciliation. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

• • •

The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba is planning a worship celebration for its 52 congregations on July 16, 10 a.m., at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. The theme for the gathering is "Celebrating God's Faithfulness." All congregations are asked to close their own churches for the day. The service will feature orchestra, choirs, soloists, congregational singing, drama, testimonies, stories and a sermon. A book on the history of the conference will be introduced. The service will end with a sending ceremony for camp workers, after which some congregations will picnic in city parks. The Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization is planning afternoon activities for youth.

• • •

Staff and board members of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Western District Conference, along with teams from seven other Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions met March 23-26 at St. Mary College in Leavenworth, Kan., to begin an anti-racism training process called The Damascus Road. A team from Crossroads, an interfaith ministry for racial justice, helped the 47 participants analyze how institutions need to go beyond "nonracism" to working actively to dismantle racism. The sessions included times of worship and prayer, instruction and discussion. A follow-up event focusing on developing anti-racism educating and organizing skills will be held May 20-24 in Chicago. After that, the teams from the various groups will seek to train others in their institutions to work for long-term change in regard to racism.

Dutch Mennonite congregations have begun celebrating the 500th anniversary of Menno Simons' birth. At Mennorode, Elspeet, congregations from a wide area organized a "Menno festival." The festival included Mennonite-related materials, medieval music from the era, and a Mennonite satirical program given by Mennonites from the Zaan area. (*Mennonite World Conference*)

• • •

"Health has to do with how we work and play, our feelings and emotions," said Ardean Friesen at the Mennonite Health Assembly March 21-24. He spoke about his congregation's holistic health program and referred to conventional health-care approaches as "the business of sickness care." Many participants voiced the need for congregations to deal also with issues such as alcoholism, sexuality and stress in the workplace. About 350 people from Canada and the United States attended the event and represented the range of physical, mental and emotional health care.

• • •

The refugee assistance program of Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, was defrauded in January by a woman posing as having a needy family. Over the years, the congregation has helped sponsor some 20 refugee groups. A crisis center called in January with a woman who said her husband and two older children had been killed in a trailer fire in North Dakota. She claimed to be destitute with six young children, including 5-year-old triplets. The church gave household goods, including furniture and clothing, while social services provided housing and financial support. When group coordinator Wally Nickel visited the house, he found no children and, after a few phone calls, discovered the fire story was a hoax. The woman had sold many of the donated goods. She was arrested but left town before her trial date. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

biological weapons are banned. The U.S. amendment is an important step toward a world where landmines are illegal and their use punished with stiff sanctions, similar to those against chemical weapons. *Byron Peachey, MCC Washington Office, and Joanne Epp, MCC Ottawa Office*

COMMENTARY

Why not support self-destruct landmines?

Virgil Wiebe

New York (MCC)—Landmines that "self-destruct" may sound like a good technological fix to the problem of mines' indiscriminate killing. Self-destruct mines are supposed to blow themselves up after a set number of weeks or months. If they don't, they are supposed to "self-deactivate" after their batteries run out. Why not outlaw all but these sophisticated mines?

Some nations, including the United States, support this idea. However, I don't believe self-destruct, self-deactivate landmines are the solution. Why?

A total ban on landmines remains a viable option. Proponents of the self-destruct option say calls for a total ban are unrealistic. But more than 20 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe have called for a total ban on anti-personnel mines. Earlier this year Steve Goose of Human Rights Watch, said he "anticipates that the number will continue to grow rapidly" and that this will "inevitably change the nature of the debate on mines—away from technological issues toward the only humanitarian solution, a complete ban."

Reliable technology does not exist. Proponents claim combination self-destruct, self-deactivate mines are 99 percent effective. When I represented Mennonite Central Committee at the United Nations mines conference in Vienna last October, I asked a military expert if this was feasible. His reply was a hesitant "maybe." Unanswered questions, such as the effect various climates may have on these technologies, remain. Again and again in the history of the arms trade, similar claims by manufacturers have turned out to be tragically incorrect. The unexploded "bombies," or cluster bomblets, dropped on Laos were supposed to explode on contact. Thirty years later they are still exploding, maiming and killing.

The technology is extremely expensive. Poor countries could not afford to develop or purchase these sophisticated mines. Rich countries are not likely to share their technology for free. China, one of the world's major suppliers of landmines, has stated it can't achieve 99 percent effectiveness rates. Poor countries will likely oppose or ignore international treaties that allow only self-destruct, self-deactivate mines, feeling this discriminates against them.

Clearing a deactivated mine costs just as much as clearing a "live" mine because there is usually no way to tell the difference.

Current treaty proposals that would require self-destruct, self-deactivate mines apply only to landmines dropped from planes or spread by artillery. Mines laid by hand would need to be detectable but would not be equipped with self-destruct mechanisms.

Let's continue our work toward a total ban on landmines and not be tempted by quick technological fixes. We can turn public opinion. During the Vietnam War era, the U.S. military frequently dropped napalm bombs. Today few countries would even consider using them. Citizen outrage, spurred in part by the famous news photo of a Vietnamese girl with napalm burns running down the road,

Where to write

United States: President Bill Clinton, The White House, Washington, DC 20500

Canada: The Honorable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs; The Honorable David Collenette, Minister of National Defence or to your Member of Parliament. Address is House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6 (no postage required).

Constituents who write letters to government are invited to copy Mennonite Central Committee at MCC Washington, 110 Maryland Avenue NE #502, Washington, DC 20002, or MCC Ottawa, 803-63 Sparks Street, Ottawa, ON K1P 5A6.

made the use of napalm bombs morally unacceptable. Landmines are just as morally repugnant.

Virgil Wiebe, Manhattan Fellowship, New York, consultant to the MCC Peace Office, is working to further the banning of landmines by focusing on cluster bomb and landmine legislation. He will represent MCC at the United Nations Review Conference on Conventional Weapons to be held in April in Vienna.

FLP cuts staff positions

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—With a mandate "to bring Faith & Life Press into long-term financial viability," the Leadership Task Force, appointed by the Commission on Education (COE) at a March 8-12 meeting, took immediate action to reduce operating expenses by $114,000 U.S. by cutting several staff positions. FLP is the publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Over the years, the COE board had approved additional staff in hopes of increasing sales," said Norma Johnson, FLP publisher and COE executive secretary. However, FLP had a net operating loss of $183,367 U.S. for the 1995 fiscal year and, consequently, had to borrow $180,000 from the General Conference to cover its expenses.

> **"While staff cuts are always painful, our financial situation made these reductions a necessity."**
>
> ***Jeff Wright***

Three positions were eliminated. Director of marketing and sales, held by Mark Regier, Newton, since June 1990, and mail clerk, held by Galen Harms, Whitewater, Kan., since March 1990, ended as of April 5. A support services position, currently vacant, will not be filled.

"The mandate for the Leadership Task Force is, in part, to use every means necessary to reduce FLP operating expenses. While staff cuts are always painful, our financial situation made these reductions a necessity," said Jeff Wright, Leadership Task Force member and COE chair. "Also, as the task force examined industry standards for a publishing house of our sales volume, we realized we were on the high side regarding staff.

"This consolidation from 13.7 FTE to 9.85 FTE, places us well within industry standards, without compromising our commitment to publish and sell quality curriculum and congregational resources that are creative and thoroughly Anabaptist."

"Marketing has had an important role in raising and redefining FLP's image with our constituent groups. My hope and prayer is that some of that can continue," said Regier. "I am concerned about the future of Faith & Life Press. Its future is based on the people who work with Faith & Life Press on a day-to-day basis. It is their vision, their strength and their passion that will make things happen."

Staff cuts also occurred in the editorial division. The children's editor position, which is held by Elizabeth Raid Pankratz, Newton, will be reduced from full-time to half-time effective May 1. Two secretaries—Lela Mae Sawatzky and Delia Graber, both of North Newton, Kan.—had their positions reduced as well.

"These staff members have served the conference well. These cuts were necessary to stem the flow of red ink," said Johnson. "In addition to cutting costs, work will be done to increase sales. Faith & Life Press staff are committed to serving our congregations, the wider Anabaptist family, and the community at large."

Abuse victim speaks out

Winnipeg (*Mennonite Reporter*)—Last November the Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, and South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church suspended Hubert Brown's credentials as a Mennonite minister after they received a written testimony from Bradley Sawatzky of Winnipeg.

Sawatzky claimed Brown had sexually violated him while they shared a dormitory room at a conference in Los Angeles in October 1994; they first met in 1990 while Sawatzky was a student at a Mennonite high school in Manitoba.

On Oct. 26, 1994, Brown resigned from his position as dean of students at Hesston (Kan.) College, a Mennonite Church college. Brown was executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General

The Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center is offering three mediation skills training institutes in 1996. Dates and locations are as follows: Birmingham, Mich., May 6-10; Lombard, Ill., Aug. 5-9, and Kansas City, Nov. 11-15. The institutes focus on individual styles of response to conflict, win-win negotiation skills, skills to mediate conflict between individuals, and tools to manage congregational conflict. For information contact LMPC, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148; (708) 627-5310.

• • •

The Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center is sponsoring its fifth "The Ministry of Reconciliation" conference June 13-15. The conference will be held at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. The theme for the conference is "Ambassadors for Christ in Church and Society." Speakers for the conference include Carolyn Holderread Heggen, Speed Leas, Karen Mains, Peter Steinke and Berk Sterling. For information contact The Ministry of Reconciliation, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148; (708) 627-5310.

• • •

Bluffton (Ohio) College, the Swiss Community Historical Society and ArtSpace Lima (Ohio) will sponsor an exhibition this summer featuring examples of the decorative arts made or used in the local 19th-century Swiss settlement and Swiss communities in Wayne County, Ohio, and Berne, Ind. The exhibit at the college will be open June 27 through September. A related exhibit at ArtSpace Lima will be June 28-Aug. 16. The college will also host a symposium on Swiss Mennonite decorative arts in the social context June 28-29.

The Menno Simons 500 Essay Contest has awarded a second and third prize. The winners were announced Jan. 12. Gerhard Ratzlaff from Paraguay won second prize, and Gerke van Hiele of Holland won third prize. The jury did not award a first prize since none of the writers had occupied themselves enough with the question of the relevance of Menno Simons for our time. (*Mennonite World Conference*)

• • •

Goshen (Ind.) College's English department is sponsoring a conference, "Mennonite/s Writing in the U.S.," to be held Oct. 23-26, 1997. Speakers will include Julia Kasdorf, Jeff Gundy, Jean Janzen and others. Proposals for papers, readings and performances are due September 1996. For information write Goshen College, English Department, Goshen, IN 46526.

• • •

"I think of two hopes for 'India 1997': transformation and formation," says Mennonite World Conference executive secretary Larry Miller. "A primary need of churches in North America and Europe is renewal and reconversion—transformation. Living for a week with the world church in Calcutta and throughout India may help transform us and our congregations. Churches in the Southern Hemisphere and the East need rootedness and training—formation. In Calcutta they will be able both to receive and give wisdom through messages, songs, seminars, discussions and councils. I hope India 1997 moves us all a step closer to developing Anabaptist identity, accountability and solidarity across national boundaries ... giving us the opportunity to become more fully the church." (*MWC*)

Conference Mennonite Church from 1988 to 1992.

After reviewing the allegations received, the committees responsible took joint action on Nov. 14, 1995, to suspend Brown's credentials "due to acts of clergy sexual misconduct as indicated in the 'guidelines' [Guidelines for Discipline Regarding Ministerial Credentials]."

Marvin Zehr, Western District conference minister, and Richard Headings, South Central conference minister, said in a February telephone interview that their decision was based on the written allegations submitted by Sawatzky.

When asked if they were aware of other alleged victims, they said that during the investigation of Sawatzky's allegations, they became aware of two others who considered themselves victims.

"I wish more would be done toward accountability."
Bradley Sawatzky

"The conference was very sensitive, thorough and merciful toward Hubert," said Sawatzky in a written response submitted at an interview with *Mennonite Reporter* on Jan. 25. "Although I agree with their findings, I wish more would be done toward accountability.

"The reason I'm speaking out now is [because] healing is far from over. Not only for myself, the other [alleged] victims and Hubert Brown, but for all the people Hubert was accountable to. This is a betrayal of trust of his position of pastor. Letting people know there's a problem is an important step toward Hubert's accountability," said Sawatzky.

"We did not require participation in an accountability group ... but are now inviting him to participate in an accountability group," said Zehr.

When asked in March for an update on the case, Zehr said they have had no contact with Brown. Zehr said that since February they have written Brown indicating a desire to re-establish contact, and invite him to consider participating in an accountability group. As of April 4 Zehr had no response from Brown.

Zehr encouraged people who feel they are victims to take steps to contact their conference minister.
Aiden Schlichting Enns

Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—"Any Christian in politics should constantly hold up the poor and measure every new initiative against how it will affect the poor," Ron Sider told a group gathered at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on March 14.

In the middle of this year's primary season, with issues of family values, abortion, immigration and the environment at the forefront, the evangelical Christian author and speaker asked the question, "Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?"

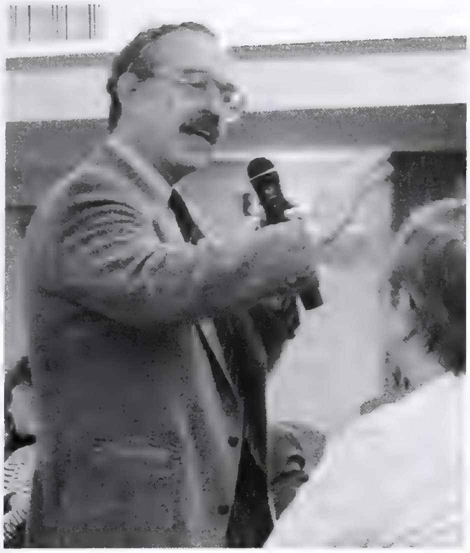
Sider, professor of theology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wynnewood, Pa., and an ordained minister in the Lancaster Conference (Mennonite Church), led the audience in a discussion of how Christians should approach political questions.

The biggest mistake Christians make, Sider said, is they "jump into their decisions without doing their homework." He cautioned that all Christians must have humility in asserting their positions on political issues. "I believe God has a position on each issue. But you and I don't know what it is. We have to find it out by a long, painful process."

Before attempting to answer the title question of his presentation, the president of Evangelicals for Social Action first shared his own political philosophy. Sider noted concerns such as sharing not only governing power but also economic power; evaluating every political action according to what it does to the poor, and valuing both freedom and justice. In addition, Sider said, "We ought to be internationalists first and nationalists second. My Savior died for every person in the world, so I must consider every person as important. We need to resist nationalistic pride."

The limitations of politics also play a part in his philosophy. "Politics isn't the only way to change the world," he said. In fact, some problems are not appropriate for the government to solve, such as the breakdown of the family in our culture. "It's not up to the state to solve this problem. It's up to synagogues and churches."

Finally, Sider called for political balance. Opposed to one-issue politics,



Gordon Janzen

Probably not: *Ron Sider asks, "Would Jesus join the Christian coalition?" at a discussion at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.*

he said he believes God cares about the family, the poor, the oppressed, creation and many other issues. Christians must work toward the balance of concerns they see in the Scriptures.

From this perspective, Sider said he agrees with the Christian Coalition in several areas: strengthening the family, opposition to abortion and lowering the federal budget deficit.

In other areas, according to Sider, the Christian Coalition is wrong, starting with its name. "The name implies too much," he said, and again called for Christians to have more humility about claiming their positions as "Christian."

The environment is another area of difference between the Christian Coalition and Evangelicals for Social Action. "This is God's creation. God told you and me to take care of it." To say nothing about the environment is immoral, Sider told his audience.

Sider, author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, said many of the cuts included in the Republicans' Contract with America are not consistent with concern for the poor. That doesn't mean the Democrats are always right, he was quick to add. But as the poorest in our country are losing and the very rich are gaining rapidly, the growing economic gap is "fundamentally immoral." It's essential, Sider said, that "the strongest political voices in our country speak for the weakest."

Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition? Sider answered, "Probably not." *Mary E. Klassen*

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

MINISTERS

Darlene and **Ted Enns Dyck** were ordained at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church Feb. 11.

Kevin Goertzen will be pastor at Goessel (Kan.) Church, effective July 1.

Ray Hamm, Altona (Man.) Church, went to Chechnya April 3 as part of a multinational Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation.

Lois and **Tom Harder** will share an associate pastorate at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., beginning Oct. 1. They have been serving as program directors at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

David and **Debra Whitermore** have ended their service at New Hope Church, Olathe, Kan., as of the end of March.

WORKERS

Tony Enns, Ottawa, has been named director of MCC Canada's Kanadier Concerns program. He had previously served as interim director.

Enns

Christine Janzen, Richmond, B.C., started a two-year MVS term Feb. 17 as a receptionist with Crossroads in Cincinnati.

Janzen

Rebecca Kauffman, Bluesky (Alta.) Mennonite Church, began a one-year MVS term Jan. 15 as an intern at Mennonite Central Committee's United Nations office in New York City.

Kauffman

Bert Lobe has resigned as principal of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., effective Aug. 31. He will be principal at the Hong Kong International School.

Loren Martin, Laurel Church, Lancaster, Pa., began a one-year MVS

According to a recent study, U.S. citizens vastly overestimate—by 15 times—how much of the federal budget goes to foreign aid. Less than 1 percent of the U.S. budget is actually spent on foreign aid. (*University of Maryland* and *Congressional Research Service*)

• • •

Earl Martin, Mennonite Central Committee worker, encouraged Bluffton (Ohio) College students to "encounter their brothers and sisters in foreign countries (through voluntary service)." Martin was keynote speaker at Bluffton's Missions Week. He said mission is about "listening, laughing, weeping with people. It's doing and being, deed and word. MCC tries to bring 'do' and 'be' together, like Frank Sinatra when he sings 'do-be-do-be-do.'"

• • •

Over 225 high-school and college-age people from across Canada gathered at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, March 8-10, for the 1996 "Peace-It-Together" conference. Theme for the weekend was "At the Center of the Fury." Speakers shared personal and mission stories of peace. Joanne Moyer, student at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, summed up the conference theme saying, "You can ignore [the violence and lack of peace in the world] or become a part of it and try to change it."

• • •

Bluffton (Ohio) College is sponsoring an India Discovery Tour, scheduled for Jan. 12-20, 1997. Participants can attend Mennonite World Conference in Calcutta before the tour begins. The tour will include stops at sites important to India's culture. Tour leader is Al Bauman, former mission worker in India. Reservations are encouraged before June 30. For information, contact Dave Speicher at Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; 1-800-488-3257, ext. 5.

term Feb. 16 as a coordinator for Habitat for Humanity in Fresno, Calif.

Linda and **Lynn Miller**, South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio, began four-year MVS terms September 1995 with Bethany Brethren Community Center, Chicago.

Mervin Miller, Pike Mennonite Church, Delphos, Ohio, began a two-year MVS term at Taproots School of the Arts, St. Louis.

John Reimer, First Church, Kitchener, Ont., is director of Self-Help Crafts in the Maritimes (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island).

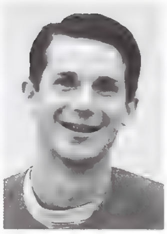
James Satterwhite, professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College, went to Chechnya April 3 as part of a multinational Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation.

Stephanie Schowalter, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Jan. 8 as an administrative assistant at the Family Learning Center and Peace Center, Boulder, Colo.

Jack Suderman, former COM missionary to Colombia, has been appointed executive secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada Resources Commission, beginning in August.

Debbie Wall, Winkler (Man.) Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church, began a one-year MVS term Jan. 15 as a bookkeeper with Interfaith Housing, Hutchinson, Kan.

Joshua Yoder, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., began an 18-month MVS assignment with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Chicago.

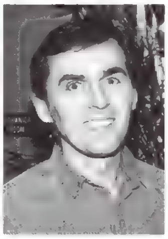


Martin

Linda Miller

Lynn Miller

Mervin Miller



Reimer

Schowalter

Wall

Yoder

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary has a half- to three-quarter time opening for an **administrative assistant** to the director of business and finance. Degree in accounting preferred, training and experience in accounting is essential. Applicants must be familiar with computers. Opening available June 15.

If interested, contact **Virgil Claassen, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; (219) 296-6206**. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Coordinator of guest services at Camp Friedenswald, a Mennonite camp and retreat center southeast of Cassopolis, Mich. Requires basic housekeeping of facilities, supervision of volunteers, 40 hours/week, flexibility, working with others in camp community, self-motivation, starting $7/hour or comparable salary package, health insurance, option of housing on grounds. Position available immediately.

Contact **Cathy Beery Berg at (616) 476-2426**.

Menno House, a unique living opportunity for church workers, interns, students and others moving to New York City who seek a Christian community, is accepting applications for summer and fall residency.

For information contact **Mark Birkey, Manager, Menno House, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 677-1611; fax (212) 673-7970**.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks to appoint a **vice president for advancement and administration**. The vice president will administer AMBS public relations, development and various internal functions. Preferred qualifications include administrative experience in a church institution, experience in development work, and knowledge of pastoral and theological education. Familiarity with the General Conference Mennonite Church a definite asset. Starting date negotiable, but not later than July 1, 1997. Process of reviewing applications begins May 1 with applications accepted until the position is filled.

Send nominations, applications or inquiries to **Interim President, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; (219) 296-6244**. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

School counseling and guidance: Seeking qualified faculty member to teach in the graduate program in school counseling and guidance. Position begins Aug. 15, 1996. Doctorate (or nearly completed degree) in the field desired. Fresno Pacific College is a dynamic Christian liberal arts college of the Mennonite Brethren Church. All candidates for faculty positions must share the college's Christian commitment. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Applications will be evaluated beginning May 15, and appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured.

For full description and application form write or phone **Dr. Howard J. Loewen, Academic Vice President, Fresno Pacific College, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; (209) 453-2023**.

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking applicants for **assistant director of visitor exchange programs**, based in Akron, Pa. This two-year position is available May 1996. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants should have interest and experience with young North American and international adults and have had experience living overseas. Good communication and administrative skills with an ability to work on general program direction and implementation and detail work are important.

Interested people in the United States contact **Dwight McFadden, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**. Applications due **April 30**.

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track position in **apparel/textiles merchandising and design**; rank dependent on qualifications. Responsibilities include undergraduate courses in all areas of apparel and textiles, leadership for apparel/textiles program in advising, intern supervision and student recruitment; participation in professional organizations and overall maintenance of the apparel/textiles program; ability to teach introductory courses in interiors, resource management and/or human ecology. Successful candidates will hold an advanced degree in apparel and textiles or family and consumer sciences with demonstrated teaching ability in apparel and textiles. Master's degree required, Ph.D. preferred. Successful teaching experience, industry experience/ability to place and supervise student interns; enthusiasm for working with undergraduate students and participation in family and consumer sciences departmental efforts and activities. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until position is filled. Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac.

Submit letter of application, resume or vita, three letters of reference, and unofficial transcripts to **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. EOE

Harvest help wanted: truck drivers and combine operators. Starting mid-May and ending late August or mid-September.

Call **Lance Martens at (316) 543-2851**.

Goshen College announces two full-time positions in **physical education** beginning July 1996. Each position combines coaching one or two sports (women's basketball, women's volleyball, women's softball or women's tennis) with responsibilities as teacher (particularly fitness, outdoor education and racquet sports) and/or administrator (athletic director for men's and women's sports or coordinator of fitness programs). Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660; e-mail johndn@goshen.edu**. Web site: http://www.goshen.edu

---

Hesston College announces the following full-time faculty position openings beginning fall 1996:

- **Mathematics**, Ph.D. required—to teach standard college mathematics courses
- **Psychology/campus counselor**, Ph.D. required—to teach general psychology, developmental psychology and other psychology-related courses on a half-time basis, and to serve half-time as the college's campus counselor
- **Music/keyboard**, master's degree with emphasis in piano pedagogy, experience in piano instruction and knowledge of Suzuki instruction desirable, to serve half-time at Hesston College and half-time at Bethel College Academy of Music (a community music school beginning operation fall 1996, offering keyboard instruction to intermediate and advanced students and assisting in development of academy and recruitment of students)

Position descriptions are available at http://www.hesston.edu/academic/deanso/openings.htm. Send resume and list of three references to **Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; (316) 327-8206; e-mail PaulK@hesston.edu**.

---

non-violence

in a violent world

Multicultural Christian youth talk about fights, abuse, peer pressure and guns at school. Can Christians really "turn the other cheek"? These youth think so! Struggle with them. Four 10 minute segments. Includes leaders guide.

Contact the MCC office nearest you to borrow this video. Available for purchase from MCC in Akron: Institutions $75 (Cdn.)/$60 (U.S.), Individuals $25(Cdn.) /$20 (U. S.).

Video for youth

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Mennonite Board of Missions is seeking a person with passion for global mission to lead the organization in fundraising and forming mission and service partnerships with congregations, district conferences, and mission and service organizations.

Contact Rachel Stoltzfus
Director of Human Resources
Mennonite Board of Missions
Box 370
Elkhart IN 46515-0370

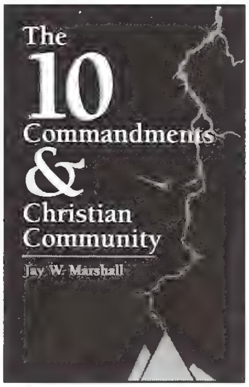
Phone 219 294-7523
Fax 219 294-8669
E-mail CompuServe 75130,1154

Take TEN

The Ten Commandments and Christian Community

By **Jay W. Marshall**

The Ten Commandments have had a great ordering effect on modern Western society. They have influenced our legal systems, business practices, and social mores. But the Decalogue can also teach us about commitment and community. The church can offer a model of wholeness and health by recovering the spirit of these commandments.
Paper, 128 pages, $8.95;
in Canada $12.80.



Available through your local bookstore
or by calling **1 800 759-4447**.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com http://www.mph.lm.com/hp

Reviews

BOOKS

FAITH WITH A BRUSH

Frank Wesley: Exploring Faith With a Brush, *edited by Naomi Wray (distributed by Friendship Press, 1993, 224 pages)*

Reviewed by Kathy Schroeder, Goessel, Kan.

This book featuring the work of Indian Christian artist Frank Wesley is full of color plates. The beautiful reproductions of Wesley's paintings and prints make a spiritual feast for the eyes.

FRANK WESLEY
Exploring Faith With a Brush
Naomi Wray

Wesley's illustrations of biblical scenes reflect his study of art in India, Japan and the United States. His original style, which combines influences from Eastern and Western cultures, brings new perspectives to familiar scenes from the Bible.

The plates are accompanied by text written by Naomi Wray. Six chapters trace Wesley's artistic and personal life, from his childhood in India and schooling in India, Japan and the United States, to his present life in Australia. Wray's description of the various techniques Wesley employs is informative and keeps the viewer referring back to the plates for another look. Wray analyzes individual works by Wesley as she describes his "new symbolic language related to his homeland, its culture and its religious art." The writing brings out symbolic elements in the work not readily apparent to all viewers. At times it may be preferable just to look at the images and discover meaning in them for oneself, but reading the text brings fresh ideas and makes looking at the images even more interesting. It would be helpful if the book contained a list of color plates and the dates when the works were created to make it easier for the reader to find the images to which the writer refers.

The description of the Lucknow school of watercolor painting is particularly interesting. This traditional Indian approach to the watercolor medium involves using sturdy paper so that many layers of paint can be used to stain the paper. Excess paint is then washed off, the paper dried and successive layers applied. The result is a rich, luminous surface made up of many subtle layers of color. The book contains numerous examples of this technique. In "Mary Magdalene Washing the Feet of Jesus," done in the Lucknow style, sinuous strands of Mary's hair wind through the painting, swirling around her face and Christ's feet. Mary's dark hair contrasts with the soft color of skin and robe, emphasizing her expressive face.

Another work notable for its expressive qualities is "The Forgiving Father." Wray describes this as a "masterpiece of cultural comment." The painting shows the prodigal son being embraced by his father. It contains strong expressive line and rich earth tones. The piece also alludes to the issue of caste in Indian society and in a larger sense the love of God for humanity.

This book is one to be treasured over time. It is a valuable visual resource full of beautiful images that both teach and inspire.

WORLD RELIGIONS

Global Gods: Exploring the Role of Religions in Modern Societies *by David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 1995, 403 pages)*

Reviewed by C. Norman Kraus, Harrisonburg, Va.

This is a unique book, full of information and well-written. The author grew up in East Africa. As the director of overseas mission for Eastern Mennonite Missions, he is widely traveled and aware of the cultural currents in our modern world. Thus he brings a truly "global" perspective to his work. He combines the scholarly with a personal perspective that makes the book quite readable, even though it is dealing with complex subjects.

The book describes and evaluates 10 major religions and ideologies that compete in the modern world. It does not deal with them as modes of theological salvation but rather asks how adequate they are in helping their followers deal with the modern secular world culture that is rapidly engulfing them. From this perspective Shenk critiques their worldviews and their ethical, spiritual and social belief patterns.

The author writes as a convinced Christian, which he unnecessarily "confesses" at the end of the book,

GOING TO...
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE
India 1997

TourMagination offers two tours that include
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE:

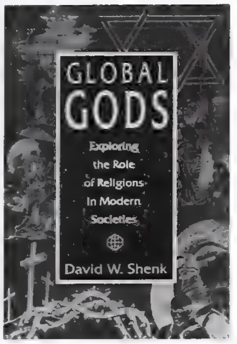
Adventure to India .... Dec. 28, 1996 – Jan. 17, 1997
Adventure to India & Indonesia .... Jan. 1-23, 1997

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

since it has long since become evident. "Biblical faith," as he understands it, is the foil against which he views other religions: Hinduism, African religions, Buddhism, Islam and Marxism. While he can be quite critical, and rightly so, of Christianity's failure to live up to the biblical vision, he is never critical of that faith. It is presented as the midwife of the modern view of the world as a comprehensible creation, i.e., a "secular" not a "sacral" reality. By contrast he judges the other "primal visions" as inadequate to meet the challenge of modernization.



One characteristic that I found disconcerting was the author's early pretense at neutrality in his evaluation. His critique of African religions and Islam is empathetic and sensitive. He obviously knows them from the inside. His understanding of Hinduism and Buddhism is more academic and critical. His evaluation of Enlightenment and Marxist ideology is almost entirely negative, if not hostile. Indeed, he approaches Marxism as a communist political system rather than a socialist vision.

For the average reader who is unacquainted with these religious systems, this book is a good but not easy description and evaluation.

THE THESSALONIAN MIND

1 & 2 Thessalonians *by Jacob W. Elias (part of the Believers Church Commentary Series, Herald Press, 1995, 400 pages)*

Reviewed by David Bartow, Zionsville, Pa.

This is the second commentary in the Believers Church Commentary Series that I have reviewed. I like the way they are organized. The introductions give excellent background on the book or books being studied. For each passage of Scripture there are explanatory notes that help clarify the meaning of the passage being studied. Then there is a section called "The text in the biblical context," which links the text being studied to the rest of Scripture. A final section called "The text in the life of the church" works at applying it to our situation. Essays on various subjects are included in the back of the commentary for those who want to do more in-depth study.

In the explanatory notes Elias does a grammatical analysis of the text of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians for each section being studied. These diagrams of the text show grammatical structure, which helps the student understand the message of the text. He uses his own translation, most of which is a literal rendering of the Greek. He does this in an attempt to avoid subtle changes of meaning that occur when the Greek is squeezed into English sentence structures. I found this grammatical analysis helpful in grasping the meaning of the text. Elias also has an essay on grammatical analysis at the end of the book that explains and illustrates this method of study.

Elias writes in a way that helps the student get into the mind of the Christians at Thessalonica. He helps us be aware of the kinds of things going on in their world so that we may hear these letters as they did. He gives good, concrete suggestions as to how the text may be applied today, but he leaves the door open for us to wrestle with our own applications. Elias' commentary helps us understand these letters of Paul and to apply their message in our own situation.

Resources

- **Growing Together: Understanding and Nurturing Your Child's Faith Journey** by Anne Neufeld Rupp (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $11.95 U.S./ $16.95 Cdn.) helps adults learn how to share the experience of faith with children and includes ideas for family times and faith-oriented activities.
- **The 10 Commandments & Christian Community** by Jay W. Marshall (Herald Press, 1996, 128 pages) shows how the commandments serve not only as a literal legal code but as a model for living in community as believers.
- **Folktales of Peace** is a 22-minute Mennonite Central Committee video that challenges children to think what makes for peace, harmony and friendship through telling stories from West Africa, Native and Appalachian traditions. It includes discussion questions for grades K-6. Available for free loan or purchase ($20 U.S./$25 Cdn.) from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381, or your nearest MCC office.
- **A Trek from Despair to Renewal: The Peoples of Africa and the Burden of Debt** by Henry Rempel (professor of economics at the University of Manitoba) is available for $1 U.S. from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151.
- **The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism** by William R. Estep (third edition, Eerdmans, 1996, $20 U.S.) updates this introduction to Anabaptism with new sources of material and new scholarly work on Anabaptist themes.
- **Frank Wesley: Exploring Faith With a Brush**, edited by Naomi Wray (Friendship Press, 1993, $35 U.S.), chronicles through word and numerous color plates the life and work of Indian Christian artist Frank Wesley.
- **Minor Prophets, Major Themes** by Daniel Berrigan (Fortkamp Publishing, 1995, $19.95 U.S.) is a commentary on the Old Testament minor prophets.
- **Martin Luther King: The Inconvenient Hero** by Vincent Harding (Orbis, 1996, $12 U.S.) reflects on King's later years, when his message of solidarity with the oppressed and his critique of American injustice became more radical and challenging.
- **By the Waters of Babylon: One Family's Faith-Journey Through Illness** by Thomas J. Davis (Eerdmans, 1995, $11 U.S.) chronicles a young family's struggle with cancer.
- **The Lay Ministry Revolution: How You Can Join** by Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch (Baker Books, 1995, $9.99 U.S.) serves as a catalyst for congregation-wide renewal. The book includes a study/action guide.
- **Seeking the Kingdom: Devotions for the Daily Journey of Faith** by Richard J. Foster (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, $10 U.S.) covers topics such as "stillness and worship," "what stops us from praying?" and "corporate guidance."

*************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 499
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

We're all on the table

As we move toward the integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, we must all face the possibility—rather the likelihood—that entities we have come to cherish will have to undergo change and may even be eliminated.

At the recent meeting of the Integration Committee (see the story on page 13), the IC members discussed at length the need to consider the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. At one point John C. Murray said to CMC general secretary Helmut Harder, "If CMC is at the table, then it is on the table."

The truth is, we're all on the table. If we are involved in our church in any way, we will have to deal with some kind of change. Change, we glibly say, is inevitable. But many of us don't like it.

I'll admit I'm one who likes routine. I've not been one who has often changed residences or jobs. My father worked for the same company for 36 years before he retired. I've worked for the General Conference almost 18 years, and I still haven't decided on my career. Occasional changes are fine, but routine is comfortable.

One of the changes looming on the horizon has to do with this magazine. The Integration Committee has said it favors one publication in the new integrated church, which they have proposed calling Mennonite Church North America.

The temptations to defend our own territory or way of doing things are great. But the rewards can be great as well.

People have asked me if I'm anxious about this process. I haven't been, even though I recognize this change may very well cost me my job. I'm one of the people on the table. Nevertheless, I'm committed to working with whomever in seeing an integrated magazine come to fruition, if that is what the designated church bodies say they want.

Other people in other structures are also involved in looking at possible changes, all with the risk that their jobs may be in jeopardy. Some have already lost jobs (see page 17).

While all these changes take place, many members of Mennonite congregations may wonder what any of this means for them. Surely they won't have to make changes simply because the larger denomination changes. Don't count on it.

Bridges: As Larry Hauder argues in our Speaking Out column (page 10), "Our conference exists to help protect and provide for local congregations." Conferences are bridges that connect local congregations, and just as we as individuals need families and friends to live a healthy life, so too do we need one another as congregations in pursuing our Lord's command to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

Many may think, We've decided to integrate, just do it. But as the Integration Committee has learned, it is much more complex than we think. And it's even more difficult when we realize that the changes we are proposing will affect the lives of people we know and love.

The chances for hurt and misunderstanding are great in such a process. The temptations to defend our own territory or way of doing things are also great. But the rewards can be great as well. Here we have an opportunity to make changes and create new structures that will be more effective in helping congregations in their ministries, more faithful to our Lord's Great Commission in today's context. That newness can bring increased energy and commitment. It is up to all of us to let it do just that.

One key in making a new denominational entity as effective and faithful as possible is hearing from people in the congregations that will make up the Mennonite Church North America (or whatever it is called). You need to offer your comments, ideas, questions and—most of all—your prayers as these changes unfold.

Don't think you can go your merry way and ignore the changes going on in the denomination you belong to. You will be affected. Your involvement—whatever form that takes—is important. We all need each other as we look to a new church. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

NNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
LIBRARY

Inside

Memories of baptism / p. 7

How to keep our children safe / p. 11

Merit pay for church leaders? / p. 12

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 09
MAY 14, 1996

"...baptizing them in the name..."

Matthew 28:19

- What are the requirements for baptism? (page 3)
- To be or not to be rebaptized (page 6)
- Friends of Jesus (page 8)

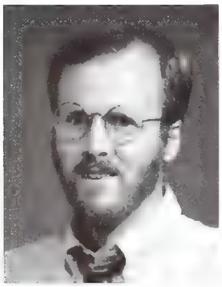
Prologue

The germ of this issue came during a meeting last December in Chicago of the moderators and secretaries of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations. One person mentioned that at times a person who has been baptized as an infant in another church tradition wants to join a Mennonite congregation but does not want to be rebaptized. A vigorous discussion ensued.

Dorothea Janzen, associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., presents such a case (page 6), her own.

I read in his church's newsletter about a series of sermons that Ryan Ahlgrim, the pastor, was doing on baptism, and I asked if he would share some of his findings with our readership (page 3). He had to condense four sermons into one article, but he presents a New Testament perspective on requirements for baptism.

Meanwhile, another story dropped into my lap that relates to questions facing the church about who gets baptized. Dayle Toews told me about the baptism of her two sons, Eric and David, who have developmental disabilities (page 8).



Sara Wenger Shenk writes about how to keep our children safe (page 11).

J.B. Miller raises a question (page 12) that may raise some eyebrows and lead to some discussion.

This issue offers much to discuss. Respond to us in writing if you wish. *gh*

Next issue: Mennonites in Europe

Cover: Photo by David Hiebert

Contents

FEATURES

3 What are the requirements for baptism?

A look at the perspectives of four key leaders in the New Testament on the prerequisites for baptism

6 To be or not to be rebaptized

A Mennonite pastor who was baptized as an infant chose not to be rebaptized.

7 Memories of baptism

Comments from people at Wichita '95 on their baptism experiences

8 Friends of Jesus

Despite their developmental disabilities, Eric and David Toews have decided to follow Jesus.

DEPARTMENTS

10 Letters
11 A way home
12 Fiscal health
13 News
18 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

What are the requirements for baptism?

A look at the perspectives of four key leaders in the New Testament on the prerequisites for baptism

Ryan Ahlgrim

Last fall First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, set up a Membership Guidelines Task Force whose purpose is to design and implement a congregational study of the requirements for baptism and membership. The ultimate goal is for the congregation to create a set of principles for determining when church attenders may be baptized or received as members. The task force selected four Scripture passages for focused study (appearing in this article), as well as articles from the new *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (see an excerpt on page 5). The accompanying article is based on introductory sermons given by the pastor. The congregational study is continuing at this time.

A church attender with an obvious drinking problem says he has given his life to Christ and wants to be baptized, but he denies he has a drinking problem. A woman who serves in the Army Reserve is befriended by your congregation and wishes to be baptized and join the church, but she is still committed to defending her country if necessary. An unmarried couple who are living together wish to transfer their membership to your church, but they see nothing wrong with their living arrangement. In each of these cases should the congregation welcome these people into membership? Or do these people first need to conform to some (or all) of the ethical and doctrinal positions of the Mennonite church?

What are the requirements for church membership? Many congregations are asking this question. In the New Testament there are no discussions of church membership, at least not in the denominational sense, but there are discussions of baptism—the ritual that initiates believers into the Christian faith and Christian community. So what are the New Testament prerequisites for baptism? Four passages in the New Testament present the viewpoints of four key leaders: Luke 3:1-14 (representing John the Baptist's view), Acts 10:1–11:18 (representing Peter's view), Acts 15:1-35 (representing James' view) and Romans 6:1-14 (representing Paul's view).

In the Luke passage, John the Baptist is doing something unheard of: He is telling his fellow Jews that they must start all over again by repenting and being baptized—as if they were con-

"...baptizing them in the name..."

The only New Testament prerequisite for baptism is to turn to God in contrition and humility, handing over one's life to the lordship of Jesus Christ, trusting in God's grace alone.

verts from paganism. But what is repentance? According to Jesus' parables of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) and the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14), repentance means returning to God in contrition and humility, handing over one's life to God and trusting in God's mercy alone.

Many people respond to John's call for repentance, and they come to him for baptism. Before baptizing them, he issues a warning in the strongest language possible: Your repentance is void and your baptism is meaningless unless you follow it up with fruit worthy of repentance. "But what is the fruit worthy of repentance?" ask soldiers, tax collectors and others in the crowd. John's answer is, Share your possessions with those who have less. John does not tell the soldiers and tax collectors to leave their occupations—occupations widely considered intrinsically sinful by many Jews. Instead he tells them to give up greediness. It is as if John is saying that nothing more clearly reveals our relationship to God than our willingness to share with others and give up greed.

Unclean food: In Acts 10, Peter discovers something revolutionary: God is removing the distinction between holy people (observant Jews) and profane people (Gentiles). As a Jew, Peter had grown up with the laws of Moses. These laws contain not only moral commandments but also laws whose purpose is to make the Jews a distinctive and holy people. ("Holy" does not mean moral but set apart for a divine purpose.) In particular the laws of circumcision, Sabbath and clean foods made the Jews distinctive and holy. But Peter has a vision in which God calls him to violate these laws by eating unclean food. Peter ultimately realizes that the meaning of the vision is that God is abolishing the distinction between holy people and profane people. Instead God looks at everyone the same way, and everyone approaches God on the same terms: through repentance.

While preaching to a Gentile soldier and his household, Peter is astonished when he sees these "outsiders" receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, made visible through ecstatic praise (something that normally follows baptism). For Peter there can be no stronger proof that these Gentiles belong to Jesus Christ and should therefore be baptized. Thus Peter embraces a new practice on the basis of a new vision and a new experience.

The issue of Gentile membership in the church comes to a head in Acts 15. On one side are some Jewish Christians who believe that Moses' laws are for all believers and for all time. Therefore, Gentile believers must become a part of the people of Israel through circumcision and the other laws of holiness. On the other side of the issue are Paul and Barnabas, who have been converting lots of Gentiles to the Christian faith and baptizing them without requiring circumcision or following Moses' laws.

In order to resolve this difference, the Jerusalem church held, in effect, the first church conference. During the conference, James (the brother of Jesus) decides that Gentiles do not need to follow the laws of Moses, and he quotes some Scripture for this view (thus supplementing Peter's new vision and new experience with a scriptural basis). James then interprets Scripture in a unique and creative way by equating Gentile Christians with the Gentiles residing in Israel mentioned in Leviticus 17:8–18:30. In that passage, Gentiles living in Israel are not required to become Jews and follow all the laws of Moses, but they are required to follow a list of essential prohibitions so that the land will not be made unclean by their presence.

Strangled animals: James summarizes these essential prohibitions as (1) eating meat sacrificed to idols, (2) eating blood, (3) eating strangled animals (which still have blood in them) and (4) fornication. Given the context of Leviticus, these are not moral prohibitions (where are the prohibitions against murder, lying and theft?) so much as these are prohibitions concerning ritual cleanliness that make it possible for observant Jewish Christians to fellowship with Gentile Christians. James' proposal is approved by all, although Acts 21 and Galatians make it clear that neither side fully accepted this.

According to Paul, we are all saved by grace through faith, not by works, so no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9). This is the only basis for baptism. But this leads to the question, If we are saved only by grace through faith, then what is to keep the baptized person from continuing in sin? Paul's dramatic answer is spelled out in Romans 6:1-14. Baptism is our cruci-

Paul knows that even believers must practice a continual dying to self, beginning at our baptism, so that we slowly mature into the image of Christ.

"...baptizing them in the name..."

fixion and burial with Christ, and since we are now dead to our sinful self, we are no longer under the power of sin. Before we came to God through faith in Christ, our own self was at the center of our lives. But when we put our faith in Christ, we let go of self-centeredness. Now we are Christ-centered, so our sinful nature no longer has any control.

Paul is concerned that believers live moral lives, but Paul rejects the use of laws as a way to affect this. According to Paul, trying to live up to laws leads us back into doing it ourselves and basing salvation on ethical accomplishment. On the other hand, experiencing God's gift of grace leads us to give our lives to Christ in faith, and this places a new power at our center that Paul calls "living by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16). The Spirit naturally leads us into ethical living, producing fruit such as love, joy and peace. And as Paul says (with Jesus), loving one's neighbor as oneself fulfills the law.

Those who do not live by the Spirit but still live by self-centeredness will tend toward selfish and harmful behavior. To continue in such behavior is spiritual death (Galatians 5:19-21). But Paul knows that even believers must practice a continual dying to self, beginning at our baptism, so that we slowly mature into the image of Christ.

John the Baptist, Peter, James and Paul all begin at the same point: We are forgiven, not through ethical accomplishment or doctrinal belief but by giving up and in humility and trust handing over our lives to God. This is called repentance or, more specifically, faith in Christ.

Ecstatic praise: From this common starting point, each of these leaders develops a different theme. John the Baptist says, If you've repented, be baptized, and now demonstrate the genuineness of your repentance by sharing your possessions and giving up greed. Peter says, If you've repented, be baptized, and God will prove you belong to Jesus by giving you the Spirit, which is made visible through ecstatic praise. James says, If you've repented, before you are baptized, agree to a minimal list of essential prohibitions so Gentile and Jewish Christians can have fellowship. And Paul says, If you've put your faith in Christ, be baptized, and now you are freed to live by the power of the Spirit, bearing the fruit of love.

Baptism is the initiation into the Christian family, not some sort of graduation. It is the beginning of the congregation's responsibility to teach, guide and—when necessary—confront.

Despite differences in emphases and vocabulary, they all agree on a common movement: We are made right with God by grace through faith, symbolized by baptism, which now empowers us to begin a new life. Thus the only New Testament prerequisite for baptism is to turn to God in contrition and humility, handing over one's life to the lordship of Jesus Christ, trusting in God's grace alone. Moral exhortation and guidance accompanies baptism, and certainly a new life in the Spirit will flow from true faith, but ethical and doctrinal requirements appear not to be prerequisites for baptism in the New Testament.

This leads to a variety of questions for Mennonite churches today:

1. Are there any behaviors that automatically cancel out one's repentance, barring one from baptism?
2. Is James' idea of a minimal list of essential prohibitions still appropriate?
3. Should those transferring their membership be scrutinized more carefully than those being baptized, since they should already evidence the fruit of the Spirit and decline self-centeredness?
4. If so, how much fruit of the Spirit (or how little self-centeredness) need there be before the congregation accepts the genuineness of their faith?
5. How do we promote and maintain our Anabaptist understandings of the gospel (e.g., nonviolence is basic to following Jesus)?
6. Since in most Mennonite churches baptism is the same as church membership, should baptism include a commitment to the local church as well as to the denomination?
7. Does any congregation or denomination have the authority to add requirements for baptism beyond those in the New Testament?

In the space of this article I cannot attempt to answer all these questions. Suffice it to say that I think ethical and doctrinal concerns more properly fall under the congregation's mission to continue nurturing believers after their baptism. Baptism is the initiation into the Christian family, not some sort of graduation. It is the beginning of the congregation's responsibility to teach, guide and—when necessary—confront.

I sympathize with those who want to maintain distinctive Mennonite positions by making them into baptismal requirements, or of separating baptism from a more rigorous test of congregational membership. But both of these approaches make us into an elite religious club rather than a New Testament church. We must remember that at the core of Anabaptism is the goal of recovering the New Testament church.

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

> *"We believe that the **baptism** of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water and blood."*
>
> *from* Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective

To be or not to be rebaptized

I wondered how this Mennonite congregation would respond to the fact that their new pastor's wife had been baptized as an infant.

Dorothea Janzen

On Oct. 28, 1956, Calvary Mennonite Church in Washington, Ill., received Heinz (my husband) and me as members. Heinz had accepted a call there as pastor.

He and I had met as students at Biblical Seminary in New York City (now New York Theological Seminary). I was a Presbyterian who had never even set foot in a Mennonite congregation. However, in preparation for becoming a Mennonite I had done much reading about Mennonite beliefs and practices. One thing that was clear to me from my reading and talking to Heinz was that Mennonites felt strongly about the importance of believer's baptism. Since the Calvary Church had come out of the Amish tradition, I wondered how they would respond to the fact that their new pastor's wife had been baptized as an infant. Surely they would require me to be rebaptized. Should I refuse? Should I offer to do so on my own? I tried to put my feelings aside, for at this point in my life I cared about pleasing the congregation and not creating a fuss that could get us off to a rocky start. I finally decided to talk it over with the deacons.

Imagine my surprise when they all said they would not feel right about rebaptizing me. I should join the church by letter of transfer, just as Heinz would. Forty years have passed since that time, and I cannot remember what reasons they gave for their strong opinion, but it was a relief for me for reasons that I could not articulate at the time.

I have reflected on this experience many times over the years and still feel that I and the Calvary Church made the right decision back in 1956, even though it was made intuitively, not theologically. Now I can more easily say why I felt it was the right decision.

Grafted into Christ: On Dec. 7, 1930, I was baptized at the East Paterson (N.J.) Presbyterian Church by my father, who was the pastor. Presbyterians understood this sacrament as a sign and seal of being grafted into Christ, and by it I was partaking in the benefits of the covenant of grace. Through it I now belonged to the Lord (Galatians 3:27). Among Presbyterians there is a strong sense of the biblical concept of covenant. Just as circumcision for the children of God's covenant people was a sign of their participation in that covenant, so baptism for the children of believers in the New Testament was a sign of participation in God's covenant of grace through Jesus Christ. In this regard they point to the several times in the New Testament where baptism was administered not only to a new believer but also to the entire household.

But this is not the end of the story. In this tradition children who are baptized as infants need to confirm the faith for themselves when they reach the age of accountability. Thus when I was 13, after a memorable year of rigorous catechism instruction in which I had to memorize the ancient Heidelberg catechism, I was confirmed. During this year my devotion to Jesus Christ grew stronger. I resolved to be true to Jesus no matter what. I faithfully read my Bible and prayed fervently. My confirmation was a special occasion. I wore a new light green wool suit. I received a beautiful gold cross to wear around my neck, and my grandparents came for the service and the big dinner that followed. I was given a life verse from Jeremiah 31:3: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." I shed tears of joy as I professed faith in Jesus Christ and vowed obedience to the gospel and was received into full communion with the Christ Evangelical and Reformed Church, where my father was then pastor.

Summer youth conferences, attending a Presbyterian college and serving on the staff of two Presbyterian or Reformed churches provided the opportunity for other important faith decisions and the sense of call to full-time Christian service.

At our interdenominational seminary we learned to understand the emphases and unique beliefs of other Christian groups. I have treasured this ecumenical perspective through the years.

Peace and discipleship: Even before meeting Heinz I began to learn about Mennonites through other Mennonite students at seminary. The more I learned, the more I knew I wanted to make my spiritual home among them. On my own I had embraced teachings on peace and

To be rebaptized would have taken too lightly the deeply held beliefs of my parents and would have lessened the importance of my confirmation, which was such a meaningful part of my faith journey.

"...baptizing them in the name..."

discipleship. I was thrilled to learn of a church whose core teachings were just these emphases. And so with joy and as another step in my journey of faith I became a Mennonite by circumstance, namely my marriage to Heinz, but also by faith.

If this is true, then why didn't I and the Calvary Church go ahead with rebaptizing me? Baptism is an initiation into the Christian faith. By the time I got to Calvary I had been a dedicated Christian for a long time. To be rebaptized would have taken too lightly the deeply held beliefs of my parents and would have lessened the importance of my confirmation, which was such a meaningful part of my faith journey. I did not want to do over again something that had such deep meaning. I also came to understand that the early Anabaptists understood baptism in part to mean a separation from the state church, which is not a relevant issue at this time in our history.

The meaning of baptism for Mennonites is one based on a voluntary, mature decision to believe in and follow Jesus. There is much New Testament support for this position. This is now the position I hold, too, and as a Mennonite pastor I teach and practice baptism according to these understandings. But as a member of a wider Christian community I also want to honor the faith journeys of those who may have come to our churches from traditions whose understandings vary from our own. Whether baptized as an infant, a teenager or an adult, it is important to regularly renew our baptismal vows to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, which is the bottom line.

Dorothea Janzen is associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Memories of baptism

At the General Conference Mennonite Church exhibit at Wichita '95, passersby wrote down comments about their baptisms. Here are some of those:

I was 9 years old. The baptism took place on a small island at Pine Lake Camp in Meridian, Miss. I remember my dad, the pastor at the time, saying that this was the place he and my mom had gotten married. I also remember the story my mom told about Easter.

I was 16, at Hamilton Mennonite Church, sprinkled, overwhelmed by the sense of God's presence and being cleansed inwardly.

I was about 15, at the Hively Avenue Church (Elkhart, Ind.) in the old sanctuary—several youth my age joined. I came with a lengthy confession of faith to share and was surprised that for many it was "the right age to do it" and their statements were brief, stilted and repetitive. I should have realized then I would wind up in pastoral ministry.

I was nervous and got embarrassed because I laughed when the water rolled off my head and splattered on the carpet.

I was baptized as an infant in the Lutheran church, confirmed my vow with my sponsors at age 15. A wonderful experience. What am I doing in a Mennonite church?

I was 14 years old and it was a cool day at 7 a.m. At my baptism I made a clear statement that I was not joining a denomination but the church of God. At my outdoor baptism were Mennonites, Methodists, Catholics and Muslims, people who supported me in my journey with the Lord.

I remember as a ninth-grader thinking, when I was baptized, Is this all there is? And by the time I went through a questioning-my-faith phase in college, I wished I had waited to be baptized so I could have more authentically tested my beliefs. But as I have experienced faith renewal at various moments in my life I have come to appreciate the Spirit's leading in my baptism.

I was not baptized because my father wanted to give me a choice of religions.

When I was kneeling the pastor helped me stand up by holding my hand and said, in part, "As long as thou remainest faithful, thou shalt be a part of the body of Christ, and a member of the church."

I was at Bible memory camp when we discussed it. I felt God calling me to be baptized. My counselor was so excited he wanted to do it right there. However, it was something to be shared with my church and family.

I was baptized a few weeks ago.

Never had one.

Right after I was born.

I haven't been baptized yet, but I'm looking to do it soon. My sister-in-law is having her baby baptized soon. I'm looking forward to going.

Me acuerdo del pastor, y del asunto de decidirme por mi solo, y la promesa de dedicar mi vida a Dios. (I remember the pastor, and that it was my own decision, and the promise to dedicate my life to God.)

I was 9 years old and baptized on Easter Sunday. I remember the water running down my face and onto my dress.

I remember five weeks before my baptism. Two of my cousins, having already accepted the Lord, were killed in a car accident. I wasn't really sure until then if I was going to be baptized for anything more than it was expected of me. I thought about it a lot and it was shown to me how important it is to make the right decision. At my baptism my uncle and aunt were there. I will never forget the empty space beside them.

Read more comments on page 10.

Friends of Jesus

Despite their developmental disabilities, Eric and David Toews have decided to follow Jesus.

Mathew Swora

What's the difference between an inch and a centimeter? Not much, when both are compared to a mile. That's how I see the difference between Eric or David Toews and anyone else when it comes to "understanding" God and matters of faith. Before the infinite mystery and majesty of God, the differences in our level of understanding are insignificant.

There are ways of knowing that are accessible to all, including the developmentally disabled, like David and Eric. Both adolescent brothers were born with the "Fragile X" syndrome, one of the more common causes of developmental and sometimes physical disabilities. But they have no trouble "knowing" if they love someone or if someone else genuinely loves them. So they can also love God and know that God loves them. Church has almost always been something they anticipate and enjoy. From their youth they have expressed something personal about God and Jesus. That is why I felt a peace about baptizing Eric and David Toews, as we did on Sunday, Jan. 14.

Dayle Toews

Likes to sing: *Eric (left) and his friend Cal Unruh*

There's more to faith than knowledge, at least the academic kind. The faith they confessed at baptism was a simple yes to the question, Is Jesus your friend, and do you wish to be his friend forever?

Actually, David and Eric had already expressed their faith in many other ways. I first met Eric, the older brother, during a church camp-out, just after our family had moved to McPherson for my pastorate. He was carrying a boom box on his shoulder and singing along with the Mennonite Men's Chorus on tape. Both brothers like sacred music of several kinds and sing with a gusto that I hope proves contagious to more of the congregation. Eric sings with our church's men's chorus from time to time. They both have memorized quite a few hymns, which I see as both the means and the signs of God's work in their lives.

David, the younger brother, is a regular in his middle-school Sunday school class. He doesn't say much, but he likes being there and listens attentively. With some help he'll do the art and craft assignments, and lately he's also begun looking up the Scripture passages, though he can't read them yet.

Truck driver: Eric feels a special affinity for Cal Unruh, a truck driver in our congregation. So once a month they meet for Sunday school to talk

Since God's Spirit is active in them, they have gifts to contribute to the congregation, not just needs to address.

about basic life issues, using material prepared for the developmentally disabled by Augsburg Press entitled, "I Live in God's Love." This friendship means a lot to Cal, too. When not meeting with Cal, Eric likes to sit in on adult Sunday school classes.

They're both shy, but they also smile, laugh and greet familiar people. First Mennonite Church would be much poorer without them.

Last fall David and Eric's parents, Bill and Dayle Toews, approached me about baptism for their sons. I invited them also to share their hope with the deacons, who were all supportive. The question came up of how much they understand salvation by grace through faith in Christ. But we shared the opinion that God holds us all accountable for what we do with what knowledge of God we can grasp. I also believe that the work of God's Spirit in us is not dependent on society's notion of intelligence. So there is no less of God in Eric and David because of their developmental differences from others.

Something of God comes to me through Eric and David, too. The request to baptize them came at the right time for me spiritually. Having spent years in the head-and-word culture of my academic training, I often need to be reminded of what makes the Christian faith accessible to everyone. So when I asked David and Eric, "Is Jesus your friend and do you wish to be his friend forever?" I was not being paternalistic or condescending. That's the bedrock issue for every believer, whatever his or her training or "intelligence." From observing their actions and experiencing their friendship, I sensed the question was understood and that their answer was genuine.

Their parents were concerned about how they might respond to a public baptism in a full church service. Tending toward shyness, they may have been frightened or disturbed by so many people. Instead we had a smaller, private baptismal service during the Sunday school hour with family, a few friends and David's Sunday school classmates. Cal knelt next to Eric, and Randall Kaufman, one of David's Sunday school teachers, knelt next to David, to help them through the baptism. Then the assembled group sang two hymns the brothers had requested, "Blessed Assurance," and "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." Robin Stucky, the Christian education director, presented the boys with their own new Bibles, as is customary for the newly baptized in our church.

Dayle Toews

Something of God: *David (right) in Sunday school with his friend Randall Kaufman (far left)*

David and Eric are members of First Mennonite Church of McPherson in full and good standing. They continue to grow in their faith, finding nurture and pleasure in hymns and in Christian fellowship. We have not yet explored all the possibilities for including them even more in our lives and ministries. Since God's Spirit is active in them, they have gifts to contribute to the congregation, not just needs to address. Bill and Dayle, their parents, bear the brunt of their care now, but that will change someday. Will First Mennonite Church then become an even bigger part of David and Eric's experience of family?

Mathew Swora is pastor at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Letters

NAME TOO ARROGANT

As we select a name for the new denomination to be formed by the General Conference Mennonite Church/Mennonite Church merger, could we try to avoid the arrogance of deciding on a name which has the appearance of designating ourselves the normative member of the Anabaptist Mennonite family by which all others will need to measure themselves? "Mennonite Church North America" (April 23 issue, page 13) has precisely this ring of self-righteous arrogance. At the very least could we tone it down a bit by calling ourselves something like "Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in North America" or "Association of Mennonite Churches in North America"? *Robert L. Ramseyer, Elkhart, Ind.*

ECUMENICAL MENNONITES

It seems significant to me that a Dutch Mennonite pastor, Janna Postma, is president of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation Foundation, and American Mennonite Jo Becker (daughter of Ardys and Palmer Becker) is executive for the U.S. Fellowship of Reconciliation. *Stan Bohn, Kingston, Jamaica*

WE STILL NEED MISSION BOARDS

I would like to enter a caveat which I am sure will sound, to some, like an attempt to throw cold water on an idea whose time has come. I am referring to the trend, observed on both denominational and area conference levels, to create ways for "helping connect congregations from around the world directly with one another" ("MCC Plans to Help Churches Connect Overseas," March 12 issue, page 15).

What could possibly be my problem with such a wonderful idea? My problem is twofold: It has the sound of "smart marketing," which is a pervasive part of our culture. Our denominational budgets keep falling short, so we invent another way of marketing missions by making it all sound up close and personal. I remember the words of an old Nebraska farmer: "They done figgered out a way to make me want to give more'n I intended to."

My second problem with this trend is this: As our partner churches around the world catch on to this trend, we may be inundated with market-smart people who know how to play the game as well as anyone. In the past six months alone I have been contacted by two different people from two continents where Mennonites have mission programs. The pitch of these two people was identical. They wanted to present themselves personally in our congregation in order to appeal for funds in the face of cutbacks in Mennonite mission programs. They were confident that if only they could tell their story directly, the money would flow to them again.

The checking I was able to do with our denominational mission boards regarding these two people gave me no assurance that we should be involved with either of them. In one case, there was a history of difficulty with Mennonite mission boards who had disconnected from this person. In the other case one of our partner churches in Europe was already a heavy contributor.

These examples prove the need for denominationally based mission programs. The new interest in being "directly connected" will not do away with our need for careerists and professionals in the area of mission work.

The experiences I have had recently give me scant assurance that the $80,000 that Mennonite Central Committee plans to spend on this effort each year is leading us in the direction we should go. *Melvin D. Schmidt, Hyattsville, Md.*

CORRECTION

The March 26 issue includes a news item I sent regarding Rommel Roberts' visit to First Mennonite Church in Allentown, Pa. (page 14). Roberts (who is male, not female), a community development and peace worker, wanted to provide chickens for farms in rural South Africa. Through Mennonite contacts, Roberts found a source for chickens in Pennsylvania, and the children at First Mennonite raised funds to purchase 83 chickens.

Children at First Mennonite are again supporting the "Pennies for Peeps" project and love Rommel and the South African children. *Leslie Mangine Rafaniello, Phillipsburg, N.J.*

MORE BAPTISM COMMENTS *continued from page 7*

As a nonethnic Mennonite I had felt for some years that I would like to be baptized as a believing adult. In October 1981, D.P. Neufeld conducted his last baptismal service, of which I was one member.

I was 8 years old and presented myself to the board of deacons to give my testimony. I often wondered what they thought as I spoke. It couldn't have been profound, but I knew I "belonged."

Being Catholic, I don't remember a thing about my baptism since I was baptized as an infant. Later, at about the age Anabaptists celebrate baptism, I was confirmed in my church. I believe that adult baptism and adult confirmation are similar.

I was only two or three months old and was in a sanctuary. I renewed "infant vows" as a 21-year-old adult.

Bishop Elam Hochstetler in the Old Order Amish church baptized me in his home when I was 13. I wore a black dress with white organdy cape and apron and black prayer veiling. My understanding of what it means to follow Christ has undergone a paradigm shift since then, but that marked a significant beginning of my faith journey.

I remember my baptismal day. As a teenager I had to stand up in front of the congregation and tell why I was accepting the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am not baptized yet.

Age 13 at Dillon Lake, Hutchinson, Kan. Immersion backwards. I hoped they'd pull me up.

At 13, Bethel College Mennonite Church (North Newton, Kan.), by interim pastor Jake Enz. I've tried ever since to obey the vows I made.

A way home

How to keep our children safe

We can only do so much. Ultimately we must rely on the love of God.

Sara Wenger Shenk

The community where I live (Harrisonburg, Va.) has been profoundly shaken by the tragedy of Alicia Showalter Reynolds' probable abduction and disappearance in early March, along a country road near here. Alicia was a doctoral student at Johns Hopkins University. She and her husband attended North Baltimore Mennonite Church. Alicia grew up here in Harrisonburg and was married in one of the local Mennonite churches. Many of her family members and friends live in this community.

While people are finding their own ways to cope and go on with life, the prolonged, ominous silence of not knowing where or how she is remains as a constant undertow of grief. It may recede for a period of time but it is always present, threatening to pull any of us under again.

There are many ways in which this tragedy strikes close to home, whether or not we know Alicia or her family. For some of us it is our own personal safety that feels suddenly more precarious. In our women's circle at the seminary last week we talked about how it feels to drive alone and the frightening times when the car breaks down and we don't know whom we can trust. Some of us identify most powerfully with the husband whose dearest partner and friend has been torn out of his embrace.

For me, the strongest identification comes as the parent of a young daughter. After the birth of our first child, a son who is now 17, I became painfully aware of a whole new dimension of vulnerability. When we chose to give birth, I hadn't known how I would ache with fear for my child's well-being or how fiercely I would want to do all in my power to protect him. And yet I soon realized that my power to protect is limited. I couldn't guarantee that he would never know hunger or be injured in an accident. I couldn't promise that he would never be orphaned or terminally ill. I couldn't even tell him that bombs and shells fall only in distant countries.

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Monsters: Our little son used to ask regularly at bedtime, "Mama, will the monsters get me?" I would hug him and reassure him that there are no monsters in the room, not even under his bed. We laughed together with the sure word that monsters don't exist. Though he needed to hear that every night, over and over, I felt able to be fully confident in my reassurance.

Then one night he asked about kidnappers who take children from their parents. I longed for the same confident "no monsters" answer that had served well before. Now came a critical test of faith for me. In answering my child, I offered only reassurance. I didn't speak my misgivings. Yet as my mind probed into the terror of a child subjected to brutal molestation, I stumbled in faith. When confronted with the suffering of children, or any innocent victim, it's hard to find a reliable word of comfort that doesn't sound glib and feeble. Even the basic goodness of God seems in doubt when children are allowed to undergo such pain.

And yet in our day-to-day lives we have to find ways to cope. Somehow we must continue to teach our children how to trust themselves and the basic decency of most of the people around them. We must empower them to walk with confidence into the challenges and possible dangers they will surely encounter.

After the recent events it felt urgent to remind my 8-year-old daughter once again to be cautious. She's an incurably sociable child, striking up conversation with anyone who looks remotely familiar. Every day she walks to and from school. It's not far at all, only a block and a half, but it's far enough for me to imagine many scenarios that might occur. There are also long hours when she plays with neighborhood children back and forth between adjoining yards, and she will sometimes stand out on the sidewalk talking to folks passing by.

I didn't want to alarm her, but I thought it was time to review with my daughter the appropriate responses she should make if approached by a stranger. "If someone you don't know comes up to you to talk or invites you to see something in his car," I said, "walk or run away from him. You really shouldn't talk to a stranger who is being inappropriately friendly."

"But," she immediately wondered, "what if it makes him feel bad?"

What could I say? Even as I try to alert her to the danger, there is little I can do or want to do to keep my daughter from being the free and friendly person she is, and I hope always will be. I can set certain limits like, "No standing on the street corner talking to passersby," but I can't in good conscience take strong measures that will squelch her joy in greeting people just because a few are vicious predators. It will be another victory for evil if we each allow ourselves to be governed by fear and teach our daughters to cower behind locked doors of anxiety.

I'm not willing to restrain my daughter beyond certain reasonable precautions. Nor am I willing to give in to constant fear for her safety. My recourse has been to use common sense and appropriate guidelines, but beyond that I must trust that no matter what happens, she will never be beyond the reach of God's love. That is the bedrock reassurance I need to stay sane in this maddening world. She and I are memorizing a special verse together at bedtime now that I hope will comfort her when she is beyond my protective reach. "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

Fiscal health

Merit pay for church leaders?

Our church organizations need clearer goals and ways of rewarding work.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Every year about this time, when the corporate world is reporting its activities through annual reports and stockholder meetings, much attention focuses on what the chief executive officer (CEO) of the company earned. For most of us the numbers look staggering.

Business Week, which recently conducted a survey, said the person receiving the highest remuneration (salary and bonus) in 1995 was Lawrence Coss of Green Tree Financial, a consumer finance company located in St. Paul, Minn. Coss received over $65 million last year. According to a company spokesperson, the reason Coss was so generously compensated was because he delivered outstanding performance. Coss's was one of the 362 largest companies in the United States that was reviewed.

When taken as a group, some of the numbers are startling. The average salary and bonus for these 362 executives was $1,653,670, an 18 percent increase from the previous year. But if you threw in all the other compensation these people received, such as stock options, the pay rose 30 percent to $3,746,392.

Most of us recognize these kinds of raises as well above the U.S. inflation rate of 2.8 percent. These raises also far outpaced raises enjoyed by white-collar professionals, which averaged 4.2 percent, and factory employees, who received a 1 percent raise on average.

There is a lot more that could be said about the *Business Week* article, but a common theme throughout is that the compensation of chief executive officers and senior members of many companies are now being tied to how well their companies do. Could some of these concepts be used for church and charitable organizations? I'm not suggesting paying church leaders million-dollar salaries, or even close to that. But I wonder if there might not be merit in tying a portion of the salary package to measurable performance. Here are a couple of ideas:

1. For the missions executive: What about tying a bonus to how many missionaries are on the mission field? We have the ability to figure out how many missionaries we had on the mission field over the last 100 years. If missions are important to us, hold the missions executive accountable for either adding to or maintaining the number of mission workers. If giving declines to mission programs, leaders may be more inclined to understand why giving to missions is dropping off.

> ***A bonus forces an organization to clearly delineate the expectations of the organization to the leader.***

2. For educational leaders and faculty members: How about tying a bonus to student enrollment? Many of our educational institutions could handle more students without automatically increasing expenses to the institutions. Schools tend to have a significant amount of fixed expenses, such as faculty and staff salaries, utilities, buildings and grounds maintenance, and all the associated expenses of running a school. Adding more students provides increased revenue to the school without a proportional rise in expenses. The school adds money to the bottom line, helping balance a budget or keep tuition down. If I were in academic leadership, I'd even consider paying a bonus to a faculty member who recruited a student to attend my school. In fact, I might want to require each faculty member to recruit a certain number of students each year. If our schools are not getting a fair share of our student population, a bonus may encourage them to find out why instead of blaming it on the student recruitment department.

3. For pastoral leadership: What would happen if the pastor's salary would be linked to performance? Some of you are probably saying the pastor's salary is already linked to performance, or that this would just add more stress to an already impossible job. But how many of our pastors really know what is expected of them? Forget the job descriptions. Most of the pastoral job descriptions I have seen have little in them that is objectively measurable. So even if the pastor does all that is on the job description, without activities that can be measured there may be disagreement about whether or not a satisfactory job was accomplished.

I'd like to go to a church where I knew the pastor was compensated based on some of the following: How many new people are attending the congregation? How many visitations were made by the pastor? Is giving through the offering plate on the rise? How many people attended an activity to enhance their spiritual life during the last year? Other things could be added.

Many, I'm sure, are uncomfortable with paying church workers a bonus for performance. But a bonus forces an organization to delineate clearly the expectations of the organization to the leader. This reduces the chance of the leader concentrating on things that are not important to the board of directors, elders or overseers.

The work of the church is of primary importance. Mechanisms should be put in place to encourage our church workers to do the best job possible, and adding a little to the leader's paycheck for a job well done may be an encouragement.

News

Menno preaches peace in war-torn Liberia

Buchanan, Liberia (MBM)—Twenty-five military checkpoints line the 85 miles of road from Monrovia to this coastal city, which has become a city of refugees in the anarchy following the civil war that has besieged Liberia since 1989.

The "Pax Liberia" enforced at these checkpoints illustrates a stark contrast with the peace of Jesus, which was the focus of a daylong seminar March 30.

"We have our big machine guns and weapons to make sure nobody hurts us. It is a peace promoted through fear," said Samuel G. Doe, assistant coordinator of healing and reconciliation for the Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL). "Jesus' peace is sharing. It's a peace that is everyday living. It is a peace that is a way of life. ...This is the kind of peace we are emphasizing in this program—the peace of Jesus."

Wiebe-Johnson

More than three dozen church leaders from a variety of denominations gathered at the World Wide Mission Church in Buchanan for "The Biblical Basis of Peacemaking," led by Mennonite Board of Missions worker Stephen Wiebe-Johnson, MBM's Africa director, based in Cotonou, Benin. The event was a prelude to a 10-day workshop, "The Role of the Church in Healing, Reconciliation and Peace Building," set for April.

"One of the things we want to struggle with in the 10-day workshop is, How can we make the church a reconciling and healing community?" Wiebe-Johnson said. "In order for us to think clearly about the church as a center for reconciliation and peace, we need to think clearly about the question, Why did the church fail in this war?"

About 150,000 people have died in the war, which has displaced more than 1 million of Liberia's 2.6 million people. Liberians are ruled by six factions of guerrilla groups. "Every major ethnic group has its own fighting force," Wiebe-Johnson said. Renewed fighting has broken out since the March 30 conference.

Two-and-a-half hours east of Monrovia along the Atlantic coast, past the rubber-tree plantations and amid the thick rain forest, Buchanan has become one of Liberia's largest cities, and has several refugee camps. "This is a city of displaced people," said Marion Subah, a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monrovia and a CHAL program manager.

"What is God saying to us about this war and about the church in Liberia?" said Wiebe-Johnson, who served in Liberia with his wife, Dorothy, in 1989-90. "Many of us have seen so many terrible things that we have to cry."

"What is God saying to us about the church in Liberia?"

Stephen Wiebe-Johnson

Wiebe-Johnson led the group in a lament over the July 1990 massacre at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, where 600 to 700 refugees who sought sanctuary there were slaughtered by forces commanded by former General Samuel K. Doe.

"So many people who had come to the church as a refuge, as a shelter, had been killed. It seemed as if God had absolutely turned his back upon Liberia. It seemed to me that God had forgotten his child," Wiebe-Johnson said.

Visibly, however, the church was silent while warlords sat in its buildings and whenever it failed to speak out against injustice, according to Wiebe-Johnson.

"The church not only accepted it but said it was fine. We didn't speak out against it," he said. "There were many preachers who supported the war and many church members who joined the war. There were even pastors who joined the war. We need to think about Liberia's original sin. What was the sin of the church? Why didn't the church prevent this war?

"The church has not found its

Inside the news

Students become Liberia's ambassadors of peace / p. 14

Mennos help Winnipeggers on welfare get jobs / p. 15

Two Colorado MVS units close / p. 17

Mexican Mennos hold national meeting / p. 17

Three of four marriages in the United States are blessed by a member of the clergy, but half of all U.S. marriages end in divorce. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

The Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale, held April 12-13 in Hutchinson, Kan., brought in $410,000 U.S. The amount, although less than last year's, when added to the Cattle Walk proceeds and the sale of the Newton House Against Hunger, is hoped to come near to the record $600,000 collected in 1995. More than 28,000 people attended the event.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee had decided to place two MCC workers in Bubanza, Burundi, a town near the site of fierce fighting between the Tutsi army and Hutu rebel militia. (See March 26 issue, page 14.) In April, however, the governor of Bubanza province asked Keith Miller and Susan Seitz to leave that area because he felt he could no longer assure their safety. Reports indicate militia activity in the countryside is again increasing. "An incident involving Keith and Susan would have been a major embarrassment for the governor," explains Lauren Yoder, MCC Burundi country co-representative. Miller and Seitz are planning to return to Kibimba, another town in Burundi where they had previously worked in community organizing and education. "Continued prayers are needed. The area around Kibimba is also unstable," says Yoder.

voice. For the church to find its voice, we need to learn to be communities of peace," he added.

Guiding the church leaders through several biblical passages dealing with peace, Wiebe-Johnson pointed to God as "the source of peace." But he emphasized the need for Christians to work out peace in relation to other people. And he asked Liberian Christians to wrestle with three questions:

- What has God been saying to us by means of the war?
- How has our understanding of God changed as a result of this war?
- What new word have we heard from God?

After several small-group discussions, Liberian church leaders gave their own assessment of the situation.

Students become Liberia's ambassadors of peace

Monrovia, Liberia (MBM)—When Randolph Carter mediates a conflict between students at Adventist High School here, the 12th-grader says he is sowing the seeds of peace for all of Liberia. The West African nation still suffers from the anarchy of ongoing conflict, which Liberians describe as "palaver."

But in Liberia, church leaders are helping young people in 14 high schools and junior high schools prepare for a harvest of peace they hope will nourish the entire nation. Dozens of students are becoming a generation of peacemakers by means of Student Palaver (Conflict) Management Committees.

Wayne T. Gehman

Preparing for peace: *Students at Don Bosco Technical School, Monrovia*

"If I was afforded the opportunity, I would try to sit and mediate among these warlords we have," says Carter, who was among the first students trained in the conflict mediation program, supported by Mennonite Board of Missions. "If we as palaver managers were given the chance to just converse with them, I am sure ... they would give us an opportunity to share with them."

The program was initiated through the Christian Health Association of Liberia. CHAL provides 10 days of training for teams of five students. The topics include active listening skills, mediation, trauma healing and peace. Then students are sent back into their schools to encourage their peers to participate in the voluntary program.

"When I heard about the program, I was so happy because it was going to be done in a nonviolent way," says Carter. "After the civil war, there came some violent actions in the schools. We had some traumatized students who would do a lot of things."

"What I learned first and foremost was how to control myself, how to handle the anger within [me]," says Moses F. Zinnah, a palaver manager at Tubman High School. The school includes Monrovia's richest and poorest students, as well as students from every faction involved in the civil war.

"Some people have been traumatized due to the war," says Patrick S. Kaifar, secretary of Tubman's Palaver Management Team. "We can better live as Liberians and as citizens when we live loving one another."

In a nation where 15,000 children served as soldiers during the recent civil war, people seem ready to embrace the gospel of peace.

Carter represented Liberian youth at an international conference in Ivory Coast, where he called for tougher standards for nations who recruit children as warriors. "Every palaver manager who has been well-trained will be like a seed for peace," Carter says. "Schools will make peace in their communities. Communities will make peace in society. ... Liberia will make peace and will extend that peace to the subcontinent, the continent and the world in general." *Tom Price*

The 17th annual Nebraska Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale and Auction raised $145,000 for MCC. The event was held March 29-30 at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds.

• • •

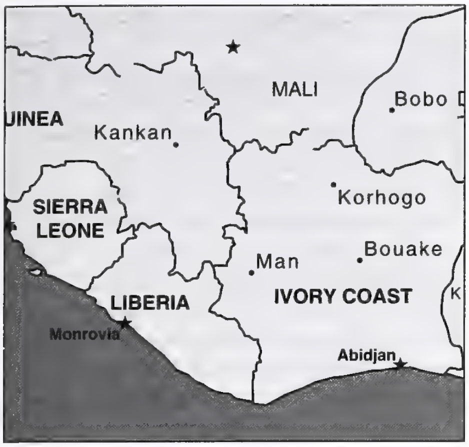
Around 10,000 people attended the Pennsylvania Relief Sale, held April 5-6 in Harrisburg. Over 100 churches, plus individuals, schools and stores donated $20,000 worth of coins through the "Penny Power" project. The sale raised $300,000 U.S. for Mennonite Central Committee.

• • •

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring an international learning visit for educators to Colombia May 27-June 12. Representatives from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre; Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College; Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Menno Simons College, both in Winnipeg, will participate in the learning visit, which will be led by former COM mission worker Jack Suderman.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is offering an Asia Peace Tour following Mennonite World Conference next year. The 10-member group will travel together from New York to Calcutta, India, on Jan. 3, 1997, to attend the Assembly and Peace Council. After the conference, the group will visit Cambodia and the Philippines to explore how Mennonite and nongovernmental groups are working to promote peace, reconciliation and a more just society. Participants pay their own costs—about $4,000 U.S. ($5,500 Cdn.). People interested in the tour should phone the MCC Peace Office at (717) 859-1151; or e-mail jzh@mcc.org or bh@mcc.org



"Our continuous disobedience has resulted in destruction," said one man.

"The church failed to win the minds of the Liberians," said another.

But several saw a common reason as the source of inaction by Liberian Christians: fear.

"The church has been afraid of the government officials," they said. "We, the church leaders, were afraid. We didn't say what was wrong."

Wiebe-Johnson urged Liberian Christians to follow the example of Jesus, who exposed injustice by embarrassing its perpetrators.

"When people are doing evil, Jesus calls us to embarrass them," said Wiebe-Johnson, pointing to Jesus' teachings about turning the other cheek and carrying a soldier's load the extra mile. "We think creatively about exposing their sin so they can turn to God. The goal is not to get somebody shot, the goal is to bring everybody into right relationship with God. We can't be a church of peace if we are controlled by fear and not willing to stand on what we believe," he said.

The workshop gave Liberian church leaders a taste of Bible teaching they had not experienced previously.

"People were struck by the nonviolence of Jesus. They had heard the passages before, but they had never read a nonviolent interpretation of them," said Wiebe-Johnson, noting MBM's unique role in providing leadership for such a workshop. "Many of the churches that exist (in Liberia) are along ethnic lines. We can talk about peace and reconciliation from a very neutral place. We don't have any kind of vested interest. We don't have a church we are trying to protect."

MBM writer Tom Price traveled in Liberia from March 28 through April 2—four days before the worst fighting in three years broke out in the capital.

Mennos help Winnipeggers on welfare get jobs

Winnipeg (MCCC)—Many Winnipeggers on social assistance want to work but don't have the skills needed to fill entry-level positions.

Many Winnipeg employers want to hire welfare recipients but don't have the resources to provide academic upgrading and life skills training.

Now three Mennonite organizations have joined forces to help employers and those on social assistance get together so people can make the transition from welfare to work.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) Winnipeg Chapter and The Trainex Centre, a division of the Winkler-based Eden Health Care Services are working together in a government-funded pilot project called "Manitoba Works: Opportunities for Employment." The program is designed to screen, select and train welfare recipients for placement into jobs with commercial organizations, says Garry Loewen, who directs MCC Manitoba's Employment Development program.

"It's a fabulous program—you can't ask a person to go cold turkey into the work force."
Tamara Fast

Ongoing employment counseling and support will also be provided.

MCC Manitoba will coordinate the two-year project, which is designed to find jobs for about 100 people during its first year of operation and up to 250 people in subsequent years. If the program is successful in Winnipeg it will expand to rural Manitoba.

The province has agreed to reimburse costs for each successful placement. A placement is considered successful when the employee has held a full-time job for six months. Employees will continue to receive social assistance until they have found a job.

"One advantage to the government is that it pays only for results," says Loewen. "By the time government pays us for a successful placement they have already saved six months of welfare payments."

The project is based on an American

Retired chaplain Won-Tsai Tseng, who served at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan, was killed in an automobile accident April 9. Dr. Al Friesen recruited Tseng to work at MCH after he met him in one of the village churches. He continued for a while as a village pastor and part-time chaplain and later worked full-time at MCH.

• • •

Simon Wormenor, a 22-year-old from Ghana, is spending a year in the United States with Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange program. His first assignment was in Chicago. On Christmas Eve he had just left a Bible study at Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., when police ordered him to throw down his gun and put his hands up. The only thing Wormenor was carrying, however, was a Bible. The police shoved him against a wall and frisked him. According to reports, Wormenor's skin color and hat made him a suspect in a robbery. The real robber was found the next day; the police did not contact Wormenor again. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Alice Ruth and Robert Ramseyer received a plaque in March from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church for over 40 years of service in Japan and the Mission Training Center in Elkhart, Ind. The Ramseyers were involved in evangelism and church planting in Japan. Robert served as the director of the Mission Training Center from 1972-1978 and 1982-1987. Alice Ruth served on the COM board from 1983-1987. They returned to the United States in spring 1995 and have been speaking in churches on behalf of COM during this past year as part of their North America Assignment. Robert serves as the interim director of the Mission Training Center. The Ramseyers are members of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart.

A recent UNICEF report shows that civilian deaths in war have increased dramatically over the century. In World War I, 14 percent of the total number killed were civilians; in World War II, 67 percent. During the 1990s, 90 percent of those killed in war are civilians. (*Washington Memo*)

• • •

The Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church narrowly defeated a resolution at its annual sessions March 29-30 calling for the expulsion of two congregations because of their positions on homosexuality. A two-thirds majority vote was needed to expel Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church and Maple Avenue Mennonite Church, Waukesha, Wis. Both congregations are also members of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The two congregations admit as members noncelibate homosexuals in covenanted, monogamous relationships. The delegate vote was 98-53, 65 percent, just short of the two-thirds majority needed. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Mennonite Disaster Service still needs volunteers for its work on the West Coast following devastating floods in the region in February. MDS is responding to this disaster in Tillamook County, Ore., and in Woodland, Wash. Volunteers should bring bedding, towels and toiletries. There are RV spaces, with electrical hookups available at both locations. It is estimated that MDS could work a minimum of two months at these locations and perhaps as long as four months. If work continues past June, MDS will need to find other living arrangements as some of the facilities have been committed to other groups. Men and women are invited to volunteer in these projects. Volunteers are welcome for a day or two or a week or more at either location. For information about work progress and skills and tools needed, call the Tillamook MDS office: (503) 815-3827 or Woodland MDS office: (360) 225-8941.

program, America Works, which is able to get 68 percent of its clients off welfare. Ninety percent of the clients in this program are still in their jobs a year later.

The need for this type of service was identified by people in the Mennonite business community who have a strong interest in improving economic opportunities for people on welfare as an expression of their Christian faith.

"It's a fabulous program—you can't ask a person to go cold turkey into the work force," says Tamara Fast, chair of MEDA's 200-member Winnipeg chapter.

Fast, sales manager of Willmar Windows, says her company employs 800 people during peak season. Many applicants need basic academic upgrading and assistance with employment-related issues, such as daycare and transportation needs. "We could rely on a service like this to provide us with qualified applicants," says Fast.

She is confident many of the 200 members in Winnipeg's MEDA chapter will provide job opportunities for people in this program.

The commitment from the business sector is "our ace in the hole," says Jake Dyck, program director of Trainex Centre, a training and job development facility in Winkler. Dyck says he is confident the program will succeed in Winnipeg and expand to rural Manitoba.

The methodology used in the assessment process, training plans and employment supports has been developed by Trainex Centre. "The methodology is critical," Dyck says, adding that 67 percent of Trainex clients are still employed after four years.

Dyck is excited about the program's potential to expand to rural Manitoba. "We want to be proactive in change, rather than be forced into it," he says.

Loewen says MCC's involvement in addressing the employment needs of Winnipeggers is in keeping with MCC's mandate to work on behalf of those who have little economic power and are at the margins of society.

"We want to be in solidarity with people who are poor in foreign countries," he says, "and we want to be in solidarity with people who are denied opportunity in our own country."
Gladys Terichow

A labor of love

courtesy of Peace Mennonite Church

To the glory of God: *Younger generations have learned the art of quilting at Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan. Over the past two years, members of the congregation made their first quilt, auctioned at the Kansas Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale April 12-13. Keith Penner (at left in the photo) and Carl Edwards work on the quilt. More than 20 people, ages 6 to 50, participated in the project. "Being a younger church, we had no 'elders' to teach us the quilting basics," writes member Anne Edwards. "We may be the only Mennonites in this area to have to read instructions in order to put our quilt in a frame. Our 'flying geese' quilt was a labor of love. We give it in love, to the glory of God."* (Mennonite Weekly Review)

Two Colorado MVS units close

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Two Mennonite Voluntary Service units located in Denver and Fort Collins, Colo., are closing their doors. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The Denver unit will close May 31. For 20 years it has been a cooperative effort of the Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, First Mennonite Church in Denver, and Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo.

The last MVSers to serve in the Fort Collins unit left in December 1994. The Fort Collins Mennonite Fellowship held a worship service March 24 to observe formally closure of the unit.

The congregations that support these units cited a lack of new volunteers as a key factor in their decisions. MVS ended last year with 59 volunteers compared with 75 volunteers at the end of 1994, a 21 percent drop.

"Many lives have been touched and many people have been served."
Barbara Yoder Stutzman

However, other issues also played a role. "The agencies this unit has supported are now stable; MVS workers are no longer crucial to their continuation," says Barbara Yoder Stutzman, chair of the Denver MVS support committee.

In addition, many Denver-area church members serve as volunteers in a variety of social service agencies.

The Fort Collins volunteers worked with an agency that provides housing and social services to homeless families. When no new volunteers were available to work with the agency, the MVS support committee expressed interest in establishing a unit that would focus on community and spirituality.

Committee members discovered, though, that they didn't have the energy to create a new format for the unit, says Karla Kauffman, pastor.

The Denver area churches hope to see the unit reopened in several years. The MVS support committee recommends that if a new unit is established, it should grow out of "the supporting church's vision, passion, mission and goals."

"This is in no way an indication that MVS is less important," says Jerry Weaver, pastor at First Mennonite Church. "Our church remains very interested and committed to voluntary service. Any way the church can model service as an option is important."

Stutzman also observes that "many lives have been touched and many people have been served. It has been an awesome project of learning from one another—about ourselves, about our faith and about life," she says.
Carla Reimer

Mexican Mennos hold national meeting

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The first-ever national meeting of the Union of Anabaptist Mennonite Churches in Mexico (IAMUM) was held in Mexico City April 8-14.

Fifty people representing six regional conferences participated in the gathering. Victor Pedroza Cruz, IAMUM general administrator, saw the event as a time for "dialogue, not only on the national level but also on an international level, especially with the Mennonite conferences in Canada and the United States, who are involved in church planting in Mexico."

Members of North American mission organizations attended, as did a member of the German-speaking Mexican Mennonite conference.

IAMUM was formed in 1993 in response to a new law that required all Protestant churches to be registered with the Mexican government. That law was one of the issues addressed at the gathering. Many felt it was discriminatory, since Roman Catholic churches are not required to follow it.

Some, however, observed that the law pushes the church to be more prophetic. They noted that their citizenship belongs to the kingdom of God, not the state, says Glendon Klaassen, executive secretary for the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. He attended the event.

Participants also discussed how they could increase awareness about the Mennonite church in Mexico. They agreed that the best way to do this is to continue to offer a holistic approach to their ministry, emphasizing the unique theology of Mennonites.

The world's 358 billionaires have a combined net worth of $760 billion, equal to that of the bottom 45 percent of the world population. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Forty people from around the United States attended the Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office "Engage the Powers" conference, March 30 to April 2, in Washington. Senator Paul Simon of Illinois discussed how personal faith applies to politics. Wilma Bailey of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., spoke on the biblical roots for Anabaptist advocacy. Seminar attenders participated in workshops on various political issues and visited their congressional representatives' offices.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is appealing for $100,000 U.S. ($138,000 Cdn.) to provide emergency assistance to refugees displaced by the shelling in Lebanon and to help with rebuilding efforts when a cease-fire occurs. MCC has already distributed about $5,100 U.S. ($6,987 Cdn.) worth of relief supplies such as food, milk, diapers and milk formula for babies, with the help of Lebanese chapters of the Red Cross, Red Crescent and YMCA. MCC's rebuilding will center in southern Lebanon, where 40 percent of the villages are reportedly destroyed. Some 300,000 to 400,000 refugees are being helped by 125 crisis centers around the country. Joan Barkman, who directs MCC work in Lebanon, is impressed by the degree of cooperation among different religious groups. "Muslims and Christians are working side by side, ... highly symbolic ... given the years of factional fighting." The largest number of casualties in the recent fighting between Israel and Hezbollah guerillas have been among civilians. Most of the casualties have been in Lebanon.

Record

● ● ● ● ▼

AIMM—Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

Two members of Christian Peacemaker Teams visited Chechnya April 4-10 along with a multinational peace delegation. Ray Hamm, pastor at Altona (Man.) Mennonite Church, and Jim Satterwhite, professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College, along with members of other international peace organizations met with a representative from the Russian Parliament and Chechen officials. Satterwhite is both hopeful and pessimistic about Chechnya's prospects for peace, saying, "Because of [Russian president Boris] Yeltsin's desire to end the war before the summer elections, there exists a window of opportunity for ending the war." However, "in addition to the bombing and ground attacks of villages, the entire male population of Chechnya is subject to detention at any time; they can be held in camps, beaten, tortured and sometimes killed. The inescapable conclusion is that this is a war against the Chechen people."

● ● ●

The Giving Project: Growing Faithful Stewards in the Church is developing a resource about offerings for use in congregations. The resource includes sample prayers, aids for children, models for where to place the offering in the worship service and ways to connect the offering to the lectionary reading. It will be part of a church manual on stewardship, to be published by Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press in summer 1997. In addition the first draft of a paper on the "theology" of money was sent to 60 Mennonites for their critique. The Giving Project is sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church, Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Mutual Aid in cooperation with the Institute of Mennonite Studies in Elkhart, Ind. For more information, contact Mark Vincent, The Giving Project, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, phone/fax: (219) 296-6236 or e-mail khnt99a@prodigy.com.

DEATHS

de Azevedo

Izelma de Azevedo, 27, of Recife, Brazil, died April 7 of a heart attack. She was a COM Overseas Mission Volunteer in Hong Kong, preparing for service in Macau.

Walter Gering, 88, died April 3. He served as pastor at Bethany Church, Freeman, S.D. (1932-37), Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan. (1937-1950), Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn. (1950-59 and 1970-73), Hively Avenue Church, Elkart, Ind. (1959-1964), Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) (1964-1970), First Church, Bluffton, Ohio (1973-76) and at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D. (1976-77). He also served as president of the General Conference (1962-68) and was on the Mennonite World Conference presidium for three years.

MINISTERS

Delmer and **Elsie Epp** have resigned as conference ministers for the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, effective this summer.

Edwin Epp has resigned as pastor at Faith Church, Leamington, Ont., effective this summer.

Doug Luginbill will be associate pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, beginning June 1.

Tim Schrag has resigned as pastor at First Church, Beatrice, Neb., effective July 23. He will be pastor at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) in August.

David Tiessen was ordained as pastor at Guelph (Ont.) Church March 24.

Correction: Werner Froese (not Walter Froese) was installed as senior pastor at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., Jan. 7.

WORKERS

Born

Diane Kinser Born, Peace Church, Lawrence, Kan., and Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., director of finance and production for Faith & Life Press, has resigned effective June 21. She has served in this position since July 1995.

J. R. Burkholder, adjunct professor of peace studies and ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., left April 1 for nine months at the University of South Africa as an adviser in helping establish a center for peace studies. He also will write and lecture on Anabaptist- and peace-related themes.

Kenneth Dunn has received the 1996 Distinguished Achievement Award from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Dan Hege received the 1996 Young Alumni Award from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Wendy Kroeker and **Gordon Zerbe**, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, are beginning two-year MCC terms in May, in Dumaguete City, Philippines. Gordon will be professor of New Testament at Silliman University Divinity School. Wendy has been director of Peace and Social Concerns at MCC Canada in Winnipeg, Gordon assistant professor of New Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

Hesston College seeks applicants for the position of **director of facilities**. The facilities director leads and manages the maintenance and development of the campus physical plant. Responsibilities include administration of the maintenance department, supervision of personnel, budget management and coordination of projects in the Campus Master Plan. Qualifications include experience in facilities management and a minimum of two years college education. Full-time/12-month position beginning July 1.

To apply send cover letter, resume and list of three references to **Nelson Kilmer, Director of Finance, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; (316) 327-8217; fax (316) 327-8300; or e-mail NelsonK@hesston.edu**.

Darrel and **Esther Mast**, Portland (Ore.) Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in June in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Darrel will be a development education broadcaster/trainer.

Harold Otto, First Church, Champaign-Urbana, Ill., is beginning a three-year MCC term in Belgrade, Serbia, as program coordinator.

Elizabeth Raid Pankratz, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., is half-time planned giving secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She will continue as half-time children's editor for the Commission on Education.

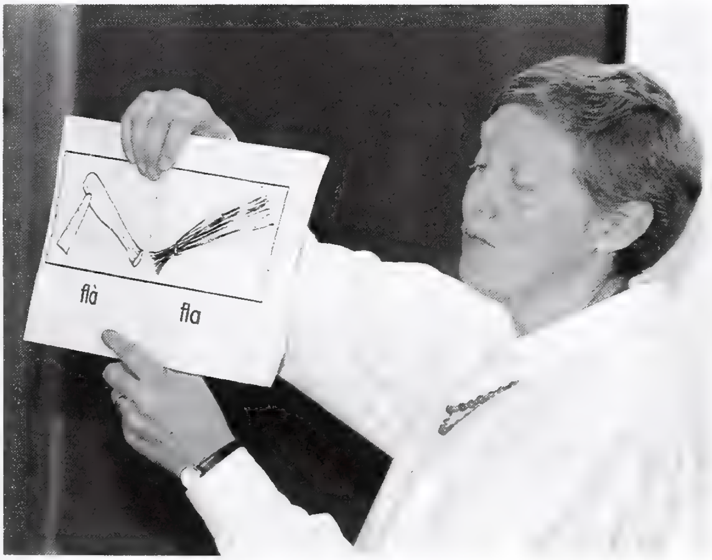
Norma and **John Pauls**, Mississauga (Ont.) Fellowship, are beginning two-year MCC terms in May in Ephrata, Pa., and Lancaster, Pa., respectively. Norma will be a receptionist and salesperson for Self-Help Crafts of the World and John a resource development and information analyst at Tabor Community Services.

Vern Preheim, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., has received the Outstanding Alumni Award for 1996 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Rebekah Ray and **Terry Roberts**, Germantown Church, Philadelphia, are beginning 16-month MCC terms with Kuruman Moffat Mission in Kuruman, South Africa, working as library and development assistants.

Don and **Kathleen Rempel Boschman**, Hope Church, Winnipeg, are on a six-month North America Assignment. They serve in Botswana with AIMM and COM, Don in theological work with the African Independent Churches, and Kathleen with AIDS education and physiotherapy.

'Being faithful is what counts,' says missionary



Mary E. Klassen

Trust and respect: *Donna Kampen Entz displays linguistic materials developed for the tribal language of the Burkina Faso village where she and her family have lived for the last eight years. Entz and her husband, Loren, have been workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission for 20 years. Recently she spent several days at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., talking about her work. The primary goal, she says, is to "build relationships of trust and respect at the village level, and have God's message grow out of these relationships." The next few years will be important in revealing what God wants for this village, Entz says. "Being faithful is what counts."*

Homecoming Sunday

Come join us at
Salem Mennonite Church
of Kidron, Ohio,
to experience the old
and the new ...

... old friends, new faces,
old hymns, new choruses,
old memories, new ideas

Mark your calendars now for
Sunday, May 19

Invite all your friends and neighbors who have had ties to Salem at one time or another.

Join us for:
Sunday school at 9:30 a.m.
worship celebration at 10:30 a.m.
and fellowship meal at noon.

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor** to begin July 1. Primary duties include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and resume, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7535; fax (219) 535-7609; e-mail: martyel@goshen.edu; web site: http://www.goshen.edu**. Application deadline: **May 24**, 1996, or until the position is filled. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Hesston College announces the following full-time faculty position openings beginning fall 1996:

- **Mathematics**, Ph.D. required—to teach standard college mathematics courses
- **Psychology/campus counselor**, Ph.D. required—to teach general psychology, developmental psychology and other psychology-related courses on a half-time basis, and to serve half-time as the college's campus counselor
- **Music/keyboard**, master's degree with emphasis in piano pedagogy, experience in piano instruction and knowledge of Suzuki instruction desirable, to serve half-time at Hesston College and half-time at Bethel College Academy of Music (a community music school beginning operation fall 1996, offering keyboard instruction to intermediate and advanced students and assisting in development of academy and recruitment of students)

Position descriptions are available at: http://www.hesston.edu/academic/deanso/openings.htm. Send resume and list of three references to **Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; (316) 327-8206; e-mail PaulK@hesston.edu**.

Full-time youth pastor: Primary ministry responsibility to high school youth, other work with preteens/mentoring and young adults. Prefer youth ministry training and/or experience; Anabaptist-Mennonite education and/or familiarity with the General Conference; personal leadership skills and ability to work with a team. Our congregation is 160+ with an average 25 active youth in a growing community. Deadline for applications **June 15**, starting date Sept. 1, 1996. Salary commensurate with conference guidelines.

Contact: **Youth Pastor Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 3471 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V2S 6A9; (604) 854-3654; fax (604) 854-8005**.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks to appoint a **vice president for advancement and administration**. The vice president will administer AMBS public relations, development and various internal functions. Preferred qualifications include administrative experience in a church institution, experience in development work, and knowledge of pastoral and theological education. Familiarity with the General Conference Mennonite Church a definite asset. Starting date negotiable, but not later than July 1, 1997. Process of reviewing applications begins May 1, with applications accepted until the position is filled.

Send nominations, applications or inquiries to **Interim President, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; (219) 296-6244**. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Values? Sound money management? Expect both.

MMA

If you thought investing according to socially responsible guidelines and sound money management were mutually exclusive, think again.

MMA has been investing exclusively with social screens for the last 50 years.

This combination of sound money management and investing according to socially responsible guidelines is reflected in our mutual funds, MMA Praxis Mutual Funds.

For mutual funds that combine investments according to your values with sound money management, you need to find out more about MMA Praxis.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

Mennonite Voluntary Service is looking for a 1/5- to 1/4-time **program coordinator for the Kykotsmovi (Ariz.) MVS unit**. Responsibilities include providing leadership in group discussions, local orientation, financial concerns, etc. Interested people should be located in Phoenix, Flagstaff or surrounding area. This salaried position involves travel to the Hopi reservation several times per year. Desired starting date June 1.

Contact **Kristen Mayhue, MVS office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100**.

Celebrating 50 Years
Rockway Mennonite Collegiate
1945 • 1995

ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE
a dynamic and growing school with a current enrollment of 360 students (grade 7-0AC), invites applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

Duties will begin Aug. 15, 1996 (negotiable). The successful candidate will possess:
- a commitment to the church and Christian education
- proven administrative experience
- teacher's certificate

Experience or training in the following areas would be an asset:
- theological training
- cross-cultural experience
- educational leadership training
- principal's certification

Applications should be sent to:
Leroy Shantz, Personnel Chair
205 Bellehaven Dr., Waterloo, ON N2J 3L4
Deadline for applications is **May 24**.

Faith & Life Press, publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church, invites applications for the position of

Director of Operations

We seek an individual to provide financial information, insight and analysis for Faith & Life Press. This person will direct FLP's Management Team, report to the publisher and participate creatively in helping shape FLP's future.

Responsibilities include accounting functions, oversight of production operations and schedules, and supervision of staff. A college degree and business experience required. Financial or accounting credentials, computer accounting system knowledge and publishing experience preferred.

Applications accepted until position is filled.

Starting date June 10, 1996.

Address inquiries and resumes to:
Norma J. Johnson, Publisher
Faith & Life Press, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100; fax (316) 283-0454; e-mail: normaj@gcmc.org

FOLKTALES
OF
PEACE

Professional native storytellers breathe life into three tales from West African, Native American and Appalachian cultures. Challenges children—adults, too!—to ponder what makes for peace, harmony and enduring friendship. Contact the MCC office nearest you for free loan of this video. Available for purchase from MCC in Akron for $25 (Can.) or $20 (U.S.).

Mennonite
Central
Committee

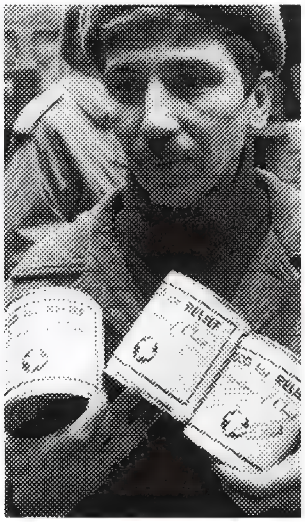
Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Together
We Can

An 8-minute MCC video

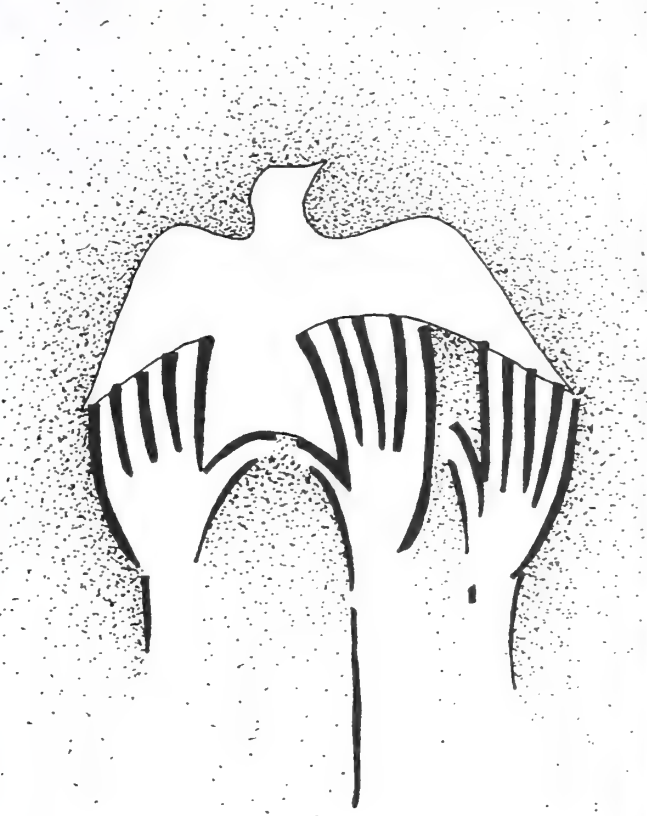
An MCC partner in the former Yugoslavia once said she believed a spiritual blessing had arrived with a shipment of MCC canned meat. "Together We Can" tells the story of the hundreds of volunteers who put up some quarter-million cans of meat yearly on MCC's mobile meat canner, once scoffed at as a "crazy idea." Contact the MCC office nearest you for free loan of this video. Available for purchase from MCC in Akron for $15 Cdn. or $20 U.S.



Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151
(717) 859-3889

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381



How can your worship be enriched and meet the needs of strangers and seekers?

Find out at the 1996 New Life Assembly

June 14-18, 1996
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Specially chosen speakers and worship leaders, 25 workshops

For a brochure call 1-800-774-3360.

Sponsored by THE ANDREW CENTER

Reviews

BOOKS

CROSS AND SPIRIT

The Crown and the Fire: Meditations on the Cross and the Life of the Spirit *by N.T. Wright (Eerdmans, 1992, 127 pages) and* **Following Jesus: Biblical Reflections on Discipleship** *by N.T. Wright (Eerdmans, 1994, 114 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

N.T. Wright is a noted New Testament scholar in Britain who writes from a solid evangelical position. I was intrigued when I learned he had penned two reflections on Jesus and discipleship. I appreciate it when academic types apply their studies in a way that reaches the broader church. But these two books were disappointing.

Both are a mixed series of reflections that developed from sermons. Rather than exploring Jesus' seven last words from the cross, *The Crown and the Fire* looks at the seven last words addressed *to* the cross. *Following Jesus* reflects on a number of subjects and summarizes major discipleship themes of Hebrews, Colossians, Matthew, John, Mark and Revelation.

The problem is that Wright tries to do too much. One cannot imagine covering so much ground in single sermons. I wish his sweep had been less broad and more focused.

I did appreciate Wright's eloquent advocacy of the church's social responsibility. He notes that this has to happen without falling into the partisan divisions of our world. Even so, this did not redeem these books.

With books such as these, reflecting as they do on familiar Bible stories and passages, one hopes for fresh insights. But I found little new or fresh here.

In fact, I found some matters that were too disturbingly familiar. Wright obviously employs insights of others (I noticed Dietrich Bonhoeffer's and Bruce Cockburn's influences) without giving credit where credit is due.

As I read these books I was not sure why they had been published. I suspect it is because Wright's name is so well-known.

BOARDS AS SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Transforming Church Boards *by Charles M. Olsen (Alban Institute, 1995, 189 pages)*

Reviewed by Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Clovis, Calif.

The integration of spirituality with administration is necessary to make service on church boards life-giving, rather than life-draining. This is the key idea of *Transforming Church Boards.* Olsen's other important concept is that church boards are different from the boards of other for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Everyone has an intuitive sense that a church board should be different, but how?

Olsen's idea is to reorient the board to see itself as a worshiping community of spiritual leaders that finds inspiration in Scripture rather than management books. Church boards don't really have the time or ability to make more than one or two decisions at a meeting, Olsen says, so it is important to have the whole board only discuss those things that need everyone. Delegation to individuals and committees takes care of most church business. These responsible people come to the board with recommendations that are accepted without discussion unless a member believes the subject warrants the whole group's attention.

Charles M. Olsen
Transforming Church Boards
into communities of spiritual leaders

To achieve the trust necessary for this type of delegation the board must become a community that spends most of its time sharing faith stories and worshiping. There are no committee reports, although life-giving stories from the work of a committee are welcome.

Boards have a tendency, in my experience, to spend too much energy telling other people what to do or not do. Olsen's model is one of permission-giving rather than gatekeeping. His Lilly Endowment-funded study describes how to remake your board. I recommend the book to anyone who works with nonprofit boards. You may not fully implement Olsen's plan, but you will certainly learn some ways to make your board meetings more life-giving.

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Rediscovering the Sacred: Spirituality in America *by Phyllis A. Tickle (Crossroad, 1995, 190 pages)*

FRIESLAND TO GDANSK

A Special Menno Simons 500th Anniversary Eastward Tour

(Amsterdam, Friesland, Hamburg,
Bad Oldesloe, Gdansk and Berlin)

July 15 - 26, 1996 **Leader: John L. Ruth**

All our 1996 European tours feature this special 500th anniversary.

Menno Simons 500th Anniversary Tour .... June 10 - 26
European Fall Harvest .... September 26 - October 11

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

Reviewed by Ken Hawkley, Powell, Ohio

Journey language is common to baby boomers. For many people this has a spiritual aspect. Phyllis Tickle describes our destination as a search for the sacred.

She says that the sacred is something we are aware of more by its absence. It's similar to appreciating home only when you are away from it. Tickle's book tries to define the sacred, which she admits is undefinable, while at the same time insisting it is something we know. "No one, not even the most accomplished statistician, can 'get at' the sacred."

Tickle uses book sales to show the widespread attention to the sacred. This is manifested in interest in spirituality, angels, self-help and "faith fiction." In convincing style she shows us what we already suspect, that things religious, spiritual and even Christian are no longer taboo in the wider society.

Tickle also describes the reasons for our search. We have lost our sense of the sacred and have drifted from the places in our lives and relationships that nurtured a sense of the sacred. Tickle chronicles social and spiritual changes brought about by Hiroshima, the Vietnam War, the loss of a frontier to feed the pioneer spirit. The loss of such meaningful questing in our lives, leads to the creation of "sensation" in order to try to put meaning back into our lives: "When exactly sensation slipped over into being excessive gratification is a little less clear, but slip it did. And with it went our attention, the shifting of our focus from our centers to our perimeters where the action was."

According to Tickle, that defines where we are—at the perimeter wanting to get back to the center. We are recovering from our adolescent time of dislocation, never having been successfully relocated with the sacred. This dislocation has caused us to ask questions of consciousness—Who am I? We have turned to books, gurus and other purveyors of wisdom. It has also opened up the power of story.

Tickle also talks about the interplay of religion and the sacred. She says, however, that although we may seek the sacred in institutional settings, it is really housed in our everyday life.

Though we talk, read and practice spirituality, we fail to articulate the meaning and purpose of the sacred that underlies our spirituality. In that respect, Tickle has begun a good thing. As religion editor for *Publisher's Weekly*, she has a finger on the pulse of the reading public.

There are several serious drawbacks, however. One is her use of language. I found it frustrating to begin to catch some glimmer of new thinking and a new perspective, only to be mired in difficult syntax and wording. This book is for the scholarly, which is a shame, because we could all benefit from what may be a seminal work.

Tickle seemed, at times, in her own private world. She relates a friend's description of his belief "that when one dies, the clouds pull apart, and in the center where they had been 'is a placard saying 2 + 2 = 4, but we just don't know what that means yet.'" Tickle calls that "one of the most profound things anyone has ever said to me." Another agnostic friend who had "one of the richest spiritual lives I have ever witnessed" describes spirituality as "like heaven naked, but with an attitude."

Some of the content in the book is just plain weird.

While her description of our desires and our journey have an uncanny accuracy, they seem confined to the white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class experience. She claims the universality of this search, but I found no examples of homeless people or those living in housing projects. I am not sure that African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians and others would express these questions in the same way.

Such drawbacks will prevent this book from being widely read. Like its subject, it is a puzzle wrapped in an enigma, surrounded by a mystery. There are good insights in the book, but few people will bother. A less ambitious and more simply written book would do better.

Tell us your story

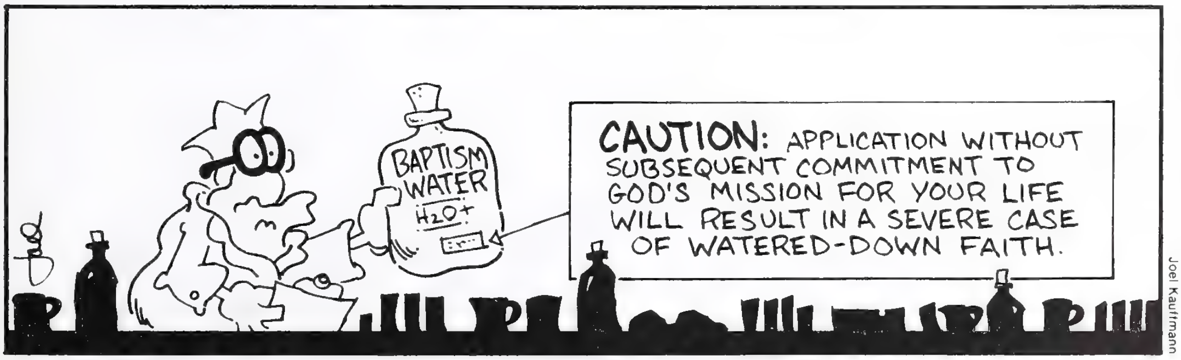
In a couple of sentences, tell us your experience of baptism, how old you were and what significance it held for you.

- Should baptism be required for membership?

- Should a person who has been baptized as an infant be rebaptized as an adult in order to join a Mennonite congregation?

Let us know what you think.

Pontius' Puddle


BAPTISM WATER
H2O+
CAUTION: APPLICATION WITHOUT SUBSEQUENT COMMITMENT TO GOD'S MISSION FOR YOUR LIFE WILL RESULT IN A SEVERE CASE OF WATERED-DOWN FAITH.
Joel Kauffmann

Resources

- **Peaceful Play!** is a list of nonviolent computer software, nonviolent toys, alternative toy fairs and more. Contact Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680.
- **Nonviolence in a Violent World** is a new 40-minute video where five teens relate how they reacted when involved in a violent incident. Available for free loan from Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381; or your nearest MCC office.

**************CAR-RT-SORT**C-020
034121.0 00000 500
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Look beyond the sign

A sign points to something; it is not the thing itself. Thus when *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* says that "the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin," it is saying that it is the cleansing that is important, not the sign that points to it.

That Mennonites come from a 16th-century movement called "Anabaptist" says that baptism is important to us. Those early believers were called Anabaptists out of derision. At that time the state church in Europe baptized infants, which not only placed them on the church's membership list but on the state's tax rolls as well.

The Anabaptists, so labeled because they "baptized again," believed that the church should not be identified with the state. Therefore they rejected infant baptism and claimed that church should be a voluntary association and that only adults who choose to believe in Jesus Christ should be members through baptism.

Refusing to baptize infants and baptizing adults was a political act at that time, one that threatened the sovereignty of the state government. It served as a form of tax refusal, since taxpayer lists came from church membership rolls. It also served as a protest against the state's authority to conscript people to fight the Turks. By forming churches separate from the state, the early Anabaptists were claiming that their allegiance belonged primarily to the Lord Jesus, not to the state.

We must be careful not to confuse the sign with the reality.

Adult baptism then served as a sign of loyalty to Jesus Christ and his followers rather than to the state. What does baptism signify today?

Theologians and Scripture scholars offer their answers. Read the *Confession of Faith* article on baptism. Ryan Ahlgrim (page 3) presents four New Testament perspectives on the meaning of baptism. These responses tell us that baptism is a sign that points to "cleansing from sin," a "covenant with God," the "work of the Spirit" and repentance.

We need concrete events like baptism to help us see and feel the reality of God's work within us and among us as a congregation. Baptism is an important act for individuals and for their relationship with the church. It serves as a signpost, and as many of the testimonies on pages 7 and 10 show, it points to a crossroads, a turning point in many church members' lives.

But we must be careful not to confuse the sign with the reality. Without slighting the importance of the sign, we must keep in mind the reality to which it points. It signifies our relationship with Christ and the church.

Legal code: While giving baptism due weight, however, we must not see it as some kind of achievement or part of a legal code. As Ryan Ahlgrim writes, "Baptism is the initiation into the Christian family, not some sort of graduation." It is not a badge of accomplishment but a reminder that we are part of a family that is born of the Spirit.

Because I've been baptized twice, you might say I'm a true Anabaptist. I grew up in the Methodist church, and though I was not baptized as an infant, I was at age 12, following a catechism class that met on Saturdays for about six weeks. I remember wanting that to be meaningful, but for me it did not signify a real relationship with Jesus Christ.

I was 16 when I made the decision to follow Christ, and at age 19 I was baptized—dunked, actually—in a Baptist church. I look back on that as an important event but not nearly as important as other events in my life. I have experienced a number of conversions, of turning from one direction to another, yet none of these was connected directly with my baptism.

How—by sprinkling, pouring or immersion—or when we were baptized—whether as an infant or at age 12 or 80—is not as important as the steps we have taken to follow Jesus as members of the family of God. Baptism is a sign, a form, that points to a spiritual reality. We need to concentrate on that reality without neglecting the form. As Mennonite seminary professor Clarence Bauman said, "You cannot have spirit without form, but form does not guarantee spirit." *Gordon Houser*

Inside

When evangelism is a heresy / p. 11

How to talk about death with your children / p. 12

Mennonites focus on worship / p. 13

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 10
MAY 28, 1996

JUN 6 '96
ELKHART

- Mennonites in Europe today (page 3)
- Peace church heritage lost and found (page 6)
- Upheavals and migrations (page 7)
- Ice and fire (page 8)

Mennonites in Europe

Church members in Barcelona, Spain

Prologue

We are happy to announce that Melanie A. Zuercher will join our staff as assistant editor. The article on page 14 gives more information about her. With two Melanies on staff, we'll have to figure out how to address each of them.

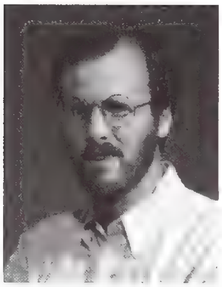
Margaret Loewen Reimer took advantage of some time in Europe to create articles that look at Mennonites there. Several of those appear in these pages.

They offer a glimpse of the current scene and show that Mennonites in Europe have undergone many changes since the Anabaptist movement began more than 470 years ago. Her articles appear on pages 3-7.

Read about one European, Margrit Kipfer, who works with barrio kids in Bolivia (page 9).

Wayne Northey's opinion piece (page 11) should spark some discussion. It provides an opportunity for a stimulating Bible study.

With this issue we introduce a new column ("Children are people, too") and columnist, Denise Preller (page 12). Denise brings a love for children, some practical ideas for parenting and an accessible writing style to our pages.



Our lead news story (page 13) introduces the topic we'll be looking at in our next issue—worship. This is one of the exciting growing edges in our Mennonite congregations.

As school ends and you head into summer, may you experience God's peace. *gh*

Next issue: Mennonite worship

Cover: Photo by Tom Rutschman (MBM)

Contents

FEATURES

3 Mennonites in Europe today

The birthplace of Anabaptism now has fewer Mennonite churches, but they are varied and experiencing renewal.

6 Peace church heritage lost and found

European Mennonites dropped the practice of nonviolence but are picking it up again.

7 Upheavals and migrations

A brief history of Mennonites in Europe

8 Ice and fire

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
9 Profile
11 Speaking out
12 Children ...
13 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

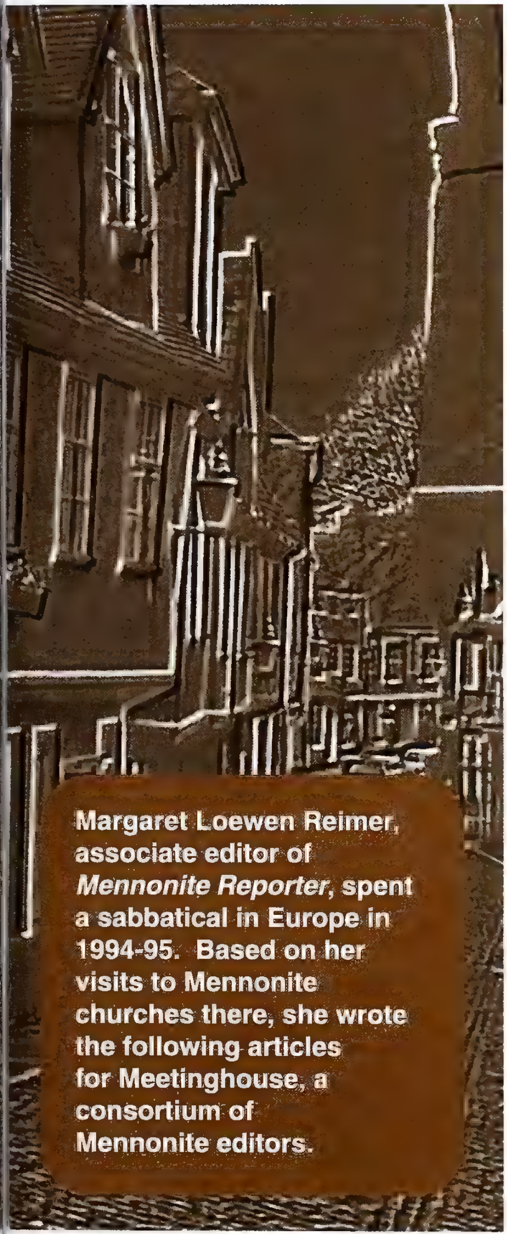
General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

The birthplace of Anabaptism now has fewer Mennonite churches, but they are varied and experiencing renewal.

Mennonites in Europe today

Margaret Loewen Reimer



Margaret Loewen Reimer, associate editor of *Mennonite Reporter*, spent a sabbatical in Europe in 1994-95. Based on her visits to Mennonite churches there, she wrote the following articles for Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite editors.

What do North Americans know about Mennonites in Europe? We know that the Mennonite church began in the Reformation turmoil of 16th-century Europe, but what does the Mennonite church there look like today?

I was in for some surprises as I visited churches and met Mennonites in several countries during a year's leave in Europe in 1994-95.

One surprise was the few number of Mennonites there. Switzerland and France, for example, have a combined membership of less than 5,000. Germany has about 8,000 Mennonites, plus another 20,000 or so among recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union, in a country of 80 million. (Canada has about 117,000 Mennonites in a country of 28 million.)

While North American Mennonites are organized into a myriad of conferences, each with its schools, mission boards, publications and other institutions, European Mennonites are markedly noninstitutional. Few conferences have paid staff or offices. Churches are involved in operating homes for seniors and retreat centers, but there are few Mennonite schools.

Dutch Mennonites have a seminary (two full-time faculty, several part-time) at the University of Amsterdam. The European Mennonite Bible School in Bienenberg, Switzerland, has been operating since 1951 (it recently dropped its French option and is now only German), and there are recent Bible school ventures in Germany and Austria. There is a movement to begin a seminary for German-speaking Mennonites, but many fear there are too few Mennonites to support it.

I also discovered that we North Americans are far more intent on "preserving the tradition" than are our European "parents." Perhaps our immigrant identity has fueled our passion for Mennonite history and identity. (German Mennonites were quick to point out, however, that their encyclopedia, *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, was begun long before North Americans began thinking about one.)

Amazing variety: The first thing to note about Mennonites in Europe today is the amazing variety of groups. Five centuries of flux and change, of wars and changing borders, have shaped church life differently in each region.

Dutch Mennonites (they are known as "Doopsgezinde," which means "baptism-minded") reflect their country's history of stability, tolerance and self-sufficiency. The undisturbed continuity of church life, however, has

Renewal of church life: *Foyer Grebel choir in Paris, directed by Neal Blough, in 1995.*

MBM photo

Mennonites in
Europe today

meant that Mennonites in the Netherlands soon lost most of their distinctives and are now almost indistinguishable from other denominations.

Dutch Mennonites work closely with other churches and share a hymnal with the Reformed Church. Congregations are independent. Worship remains traditional and formal by North American standards—most churches have little lay or youth involvement. Congregational singing is unison, accompanied by a pipe organ. Pastors are university trained through the Mennonite seminary.

While Dutch Mennonites appear to be largely assimilated into mainstream Protestantism, they are struggling with their Mennonite identity, spurred this year by the 500th birthday celebrations of their most famous leader, Menno Simons.

In contrast to the Dutch experience is the harsh history of Swiss Mennonites. Decimated by emigrations and driven to rural areas by persecution, the "Alttaufer" (old baptizers) became the "quiet in the land" for centuries. Nonresistance soon evaporated under rigid governments, and other distinctives were transformed by Swiss Pietism.

Lay leadership and "family churches" are still common in Switzerland. The last decade has seen a transition to urban life and increasing assimilation. Growing interest in Swiss Mennonite history has been accompanied by efforts to legalize alternative service. In the 1980s the Swiss church officially adopted the name "Mennonite."

Mennonites in France, who are of Swiss heritage, have also endured a turbulent history. For many years France had two conferences—one German-speaking (Alsace-Lorraine region) and one French-speaking. The two merged into one French-speaking conference in 1980.

French Mennonites have been shaped by both the traditionalism of their Swiss origins and by mainline French evangelicalism. Still largely a rural group, they have seen in this century a renewal of church life and awareness of the Anabaptist heritage.

South German Mennonites, also largely of Swiss origin, formed a conference ("Verband") in 1854. Today this group has 1,374 members in 20 congregations. Their sister conference in the southwest (Rhineland-Palatinate) has 2,170 members in 16 congregations, while the north German conference ("Vereinigung") has 2,997 members in 15 congregations.

Since 1990, all three groups have worked together in a new association while maintaining their own programs and church life. North German churches are similar in worship and theology to their Dutch counterparts, with whom they had close association

Bernie Wiebe

Before the flood: *Choir at Kirchliche Mennonite Church in Karaganda, U.S.S.R., in 1983.*

Since World War II, European Mennonite identity has undergone a dramatic change. The war was a crisis that forced Mennonites to rethink their faith.

until World War I. South German churches are more shaped by Pietism and lay leadership.

While each country organizes its own mission efforts, European churches come together for a regular missions conference. Service and peace work is coordinated through the International Mennonite Organization and the European Mennonite Peace Committee. Dutch youth host an annual International Mennonite Youth Conference.

Newer churches: Since World War II, European Mennonite identity has undergone a dramatic change. The war was a crisis that forced Mennonites to rethink their faith. Post-war assistance from North American Mennonites, particularly PAX volunteers, made a profound impression, helping European Mennonite churches recover their peace identity and renew their vision for mission.

The war also prepared the soil for mission outreach. Mennonite Board of Missions workers helped establish homes for orphans and the disabled in France, student centers in Paris and London, and a church center in Belgium. Mennonite Central Committee was a partner in starting the Bible school in Switzerland. Mission work began in Italy in 1949 and Luxembourg in the early 1950s.

Mennonite Brethren fleeing the Soviet Union after the war established congregations in Germany and began evangelizing. Mennonite Brethren mission workers from North America worked among refugees in Austria, leading to the establishment of a Mennonite Brethren conference there in 1970.

The last 20 years have seen more than 100,000 people of Mennonite background flooding into Germany from former Soviet states. Estimates are that they have established 60 new congregations in Germany.

Recent mission efforts have led to new congregations in Spain and Portugal, and outreach has extended into countries such as Poland and Albania.

Margaret Loewen Reimer is associate editor of Mennonite Reporter.

Mennonite groups in Europe (1995)

Group	Members	Congregations
The Netherlands		
Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit	15,000	130
Germany		
a. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Gemeinden (3 oldest conferences)	6,541	51
b. Brudergemeinden (Mennonite Brethren)	1,545	51
c. Aussiedler (emigrants from Soviet Union)	20,000	60
d. Agape Gemeindewerk (mission)	270	10
Switzerland		
Konferenz der Mennoniten der Schweiz—Alttaufer	2,464	15
France		
Association des Eglises Evangeliques Mennonites de France	2,000	27
Austria		
Mennonite Brethren	400	8
Former Soviet Union	3,350	
Italy	180	7
Belgium	150	4
Spain	120	4
Luxembourg	100	2
Portugal	35	2
Britain and Ireland	35	1

European Mennonites dropped the practice of nonviolence but are picking it up again.

Peace church heritage lost and found

Margaret Loewen Reimer

Twelve weeks after Adolf Hitler seized power in 1933, leaders of the Vereinigung Mennonite conference (in northern Germany and the Palatinate) declared "our duty to conform to and serve the state. … German Mennonites do not want to claim any special privileges in the event that conscription is reinstated."

In 1935, the elders of the Verband (south German conference) affirmed nonresistance, "but without restricting the free decision of each individual."

So states a 1989 booklet of the German Mennonite Peace Committee, entitled *The Difficulties of Being a Peace Church.* The booklet traces the loss of the peace church heritage in Europe, which began long before the 1930s.

In the Netherlands, Mennonites were contributing to their country's defense already in the 1600s, making "great financial contributions when the nation was threatened." By the time conscientious objection was abolished there in 1898, Mennonite objection had long since disappeared.

In Germany, the Krefeld Mennonite congregation chose in the early 1800s to let each member decide about military service. "Not a single person, however, took advantage of this right, which remained until 1918," says the booklet.

A Mennonite parliamentarian, Hermann von Beckerath, opposed putting the right to conscientious objection in the German constitution of 1848. He argued that, given conscription and the equality of all citizens, Mennonite exemption from military service would be an "abnormality."

"In no way is objection to military service regarded as an integral part of the faith," said von Beckerath, who was from the Krefeld church. "I am certain that throughout Germany the heightened sense of the importance of the state will assure that this first duty of a citizen will be performed."

Expelled: In southern Germany, men who joined the army were initially expelled from their congregations as elders tried to solidify the principle of nonresistance. But by the early 1800s, "there was no strength to resist," says the peace committee study.

Until World War II, it was possible for Prussian Mennonites to apply for alternative service, but nationalistic fervor increased here as well. A few weeks after the war between France and Germany began in 1870, the Mennonite congregation of Danzig resolved to "abandon the creed of unconditional nonresistance and to let each individual decide himself." During World War I, few Mennonites used the alternative, and none did during World War II.

In Switzerland and France, the Napoleonic Code gave equal rights to Mennonite citizens in the early 1800s but also asked for equal duties. Those who were not ready to compromise their nonresistance tended to emigrate, leaving a "spiritual vacuum." The attainment of rights, coupled with

Those who were not ready to compromise their nonresistance tended to emigrate, leaving a "spiritual vacuum."

Alternative service in Europe

Netherlands, Belgium, Britain and Ireland: No conscription
Germany: Choice of military service (12 months) or civilian service (15 months)
France: Alternative service (2 years) or development work are options. Plans are to abolish conscription altogether.
Switzerland: Alternative service is just being introduced. If approved by a panel, the conscientious objector will serve 450 days, one and a half times the length of military service.
Italy, Spain, Denmark: Military or civilian service

their sense of submission to authority, led Mennonites to absolute obedience to the state.

Pietism led to some renewal, but there was no interest in reviving nonviolence. Only since World War II have Swiss Mennonites begun a "cautious reorientation" to the Anabaptist legacy.

By the end of the 19th century, the only European Mennonites maintaining their conscientious objection were those living in self-regulated colonies in Russia. When their privileges were threatened in the 1870s, many immigrated to North America. Those who remained were required to perform alternative service.

During the years of anarchy and revolution in Russia around 1920, some Mennonites organized armed units to defend their villages. The new Soviet state granted conscientious objection privileges to religious minorities, but Stalin repealed these in 1936.

Renewal after World War II: World War II and its aftermath led to a major rethinking of the faith among Mennonites in Europe. The material aid from North American Mennonites and the service of the PAX volunteers made a profound impression: "Their peace service contributed much to the recovery of peace church identity in Europe," says the German booklet.

Seminars and conferences, exchange programs and a new Bible school helped revive the Anabaptist heritage.

In 1949 and 1950, German Mennonites issued resolutions stating that they "had gained a deeper awareness of the importance of the heritage of their fathers" and "recommitted themselves to the ... biblical truth of nonresistance." They also proposed to the German government that conscientious objection be recognized.

The German Mennonite Peace Committee was founded in 1956 to strengthen the peace witness in congregations and to support conscientious objectors. Since 1980, conferences and congregations have taken more ownership in peace education.

In the Netherlands, a group of Mennonites began working against military service in 1922. Reorganized after World War II, the Dutch Mennonite peace group has been active in peace education and witness.

A brief history of Mennonites in Europe

Upheavals and migrations

Margaret Loewen Reimer

Mennonite churches in Europe have endured a turbulent history since their beginnings in the early 1500s. Born amid revolts against the state church, Anabaptist groups emerged in Switzerland, South Germany and the Netherlands/North Germany. These groups later adopted the name of a Dutch leader, Menno Simons.

But what happened after the 16th century? The Mennonite experience varies greatly in each country. The Dutch soon settled down to a comfortable existence. Some from the northern lowlands moved on to Prussia and then Russia in search of farmland and independence.

In southern Europe, particularly Switzerland, Mennonites faced centuries of persecution and upheaval. Thousands of Anabaptists left Switzerland and southern Germany in the 1500s to settle in Moravia (now part of the Czech Republic). In the next two centuries several thousand more Swiss moved to the Alsace (France) and the Palatinate (Germany).

By 1800, about 10,000 Swiss Mennonites had moved on to North America, leaving the home of Swiss Anabaptism with a small, subdued remnant.

In northeastern Europe, too, Mennonites experienced the upheavals of religious repression and migration. Between 1870 and 1948 about 40,000 Mennonites left Russia and Prussia for North America, with another 11,000 moving to South America.

But the biggest migration of Mennonites ever is taking place right now within Europe. Since 1970, more than 105,000 Mennonites from the former Soviet Union have been accepted into Germany on the basis of their "German nationality." About 20,000 of these have organized Mennonite congregations.

Suddenly Germany has twice as many immigrant Mennonites as "native" ones, a fact that is changing the face of Mennonitism there.

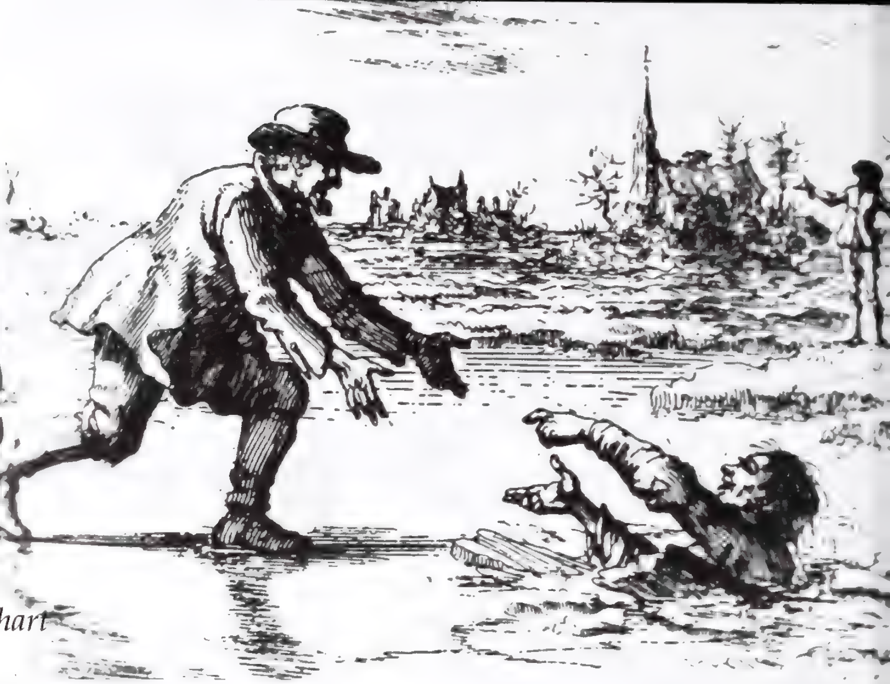
Secularism: Wars, persecution and competing religious influences have taken their toll on Mennonite church life in Europe. More recently, as in North America, churches are feeling the effects of secularism and prosperity (both good and bad).

But, chastened by the experience of World War II, Mennonites in Europe have been rethinking their identity as a Mennonite church and as a peace church. There are many signs of renewed vision and energy in European Mennonite churches as they head into the next century.

Margaret Loewen Reimer

Biggest migration of Mennonites ever: *An Aussiedler woman (left) speaks to Mennonite workers Kathy and Karl Koop from Ontario, following a worship service in Niedergorsdorf, Germany.*

Ice and fire



Nancy J. Rinehart

In 1569 Dirk Willems, an Anabaptist, was chased across a frozen lake. When the ice broke Dirk turned back to rescue one of his pursuers. He was then arrested by the man he had saved and later burned at the stake.

Ahead the trees
Black and wet with March
Rains, leafless now but poised
On spring's brink
Long-fingered branches
Reaching for you
Close
And closer yet
The lake
A melting mass beneath your feet
And did it crack?
Did it groan and shiver
So you felt the tremors
Heard the sucking rush
Of frigid water gushing up
The drowning cry
Of water death?

Or almost death
Because you turned
Went back
Away from
Tiny shoots of green
That spiked their way
Through muddied snow

You turned
And plunged your hands
Into the swirling, faintly yellow
Chunks to reach
The drowning man
Wind and rain
The cold, sodden weight
Of him
The trees
Closed, a wall of
Branch and bark
A vast and final
Distance

And when your soul
Curled and plumed away
Like so much smoke
And bone and flesh
Were cindered into black
Dust, the priestly incantations
Said, the cross dangled,
Signs made
Against the evil then supposed,
Did you turn?
Did you
Turn?

Nancy J. Rinehart lives in Biglerville, Pa.

Letters

EXCELLENT PUBLICATION

Congratulations and thank you for an excellent publication. Keep up the good work. *Carl and Susan Flink and family, Ironwood, Mich.*

VALUES AND VOTING RECORDS

The Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office reported the votes of U.S. House members and senators on 10 bills related to peace, justice and the environment. Sixteen House Republicans voted against the MCC position on all 10 bills. No Republican House member supported the MCC position more than five times. Fourteen Democrats supported the MCC position on all 10 bills. Every House Democrat supported the MCC position on at least five of the 10 bills. Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole voted against the MCC position on nine of the 10 bills. If the Republicans gain control of both the White House and Congress, there will likely be little regard for peace, justice and respect for the environment. What would be the future for a nation that lacks such values? *Reuben Krehbiel, McPherson, Kan.*

A DELIGHTFUL DIVERSION

Today we received our first issue of *The Mennonite* since arriving in Brazil. Reading it is a delightful diversion from our language studies. *Al and Sara Lind, Recife, Brazil*

STRAIGHT AND NARROW
ROAD CONSTRUCTION NEXT 7 MILES

Profile

Work means playing games with barrio kids

Margrit Kipfer moved from Switzerland to Bolivia in order to do mission work.

Christy Risser

In fluent Spanish, laden with a German accent, Margrit Kipfer explains the rules of the game to 20 excited, giggling children. "And the most important thing," she says, "is to get out of the street here if a car needs to pass." The children laugh, and the game, something like "cat and mouse," proceeds, with only two interruptions from vehicles needing to pass on the dirt street in front of the Sinai Mennonite Church in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

> *"The library gives the church a better reputation in the barrio."*

Anyone who thinks that mission workers are all work and no play has never met Margrit Kipfer, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker in Santa Cruz. Games with children and young people are an everyday part of the life of service Kipfer has chosen for herself in the small South American country.

Margrit works nearly every day of the week. But when the work is something you love, the word "work" hardly applies.

"I have wanted to do missions my whole life," Margrit says. "I thought I wanted to teach missionary kids, so I studied in Switzerland to be a teacher. I taught for a year and a half, and decided I didn't like it. I wanted to be directly involved with people.

"If I taught missionary kids, I would be getting information and experience secondhand. So I decided to become a missionary, and experience it for myself."

From Barau, Switzerland, Margrit taught mathematics, biology and religion in secondary schools in her native country before coming to the United States to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Margrit planned to study at AMBS for only a year in order to meet the requirements of the Mennonite mission board in Switzerland. "They said I needed a seminary degree," she says. "AMBS gave me one year's credit for my studies in Switzerland, and when I discovered that it would only take me two years to get a [master of divinity], I decided to stay."

Margrit knew she wanted to be in South America somewhere to do mission work, but the mission board in Switzerland had no programs on that continent. "So they called MBM to see if I could do work through them," she says.

After much discussion, MBM and the Swiss mission board decided that Bolivia was an option for Margrit. In November 1993, she left on her first term of service. Now, 2 1/2 years later, she is making plans for her next term of service.

The reasons for another term of service are simple, she says. "You can't work with kids for just three years and then leave. If you do, your work is all for nothing."

The "kids" she refers to live in the city of Santa Cruz, where Margrit works with three large projects in the Sinai Mennonite Church.

Library learning center: The center is a kind of private library for schoolchildren in the area. Children pay two Bolivanios (about 40 cents U.S.) for a one-year membership to the library. They come to study, do homework and receive help with some of their studies.

"This library allows the students to keep up with their school work and learn what they need to pass the grade," Margrit says. "People in the barrio know the Jehovah's Witnesses because they come knocking on their doors," she says. "They know our church because of the library for their children. The library gives the church

Christy Risser (MBM)

'A solid foundation for faith': *Margrit Kipfer chats with children at the site of the Bolivian Mennonite Conference church plant in Monteros Hoyos.*

a better reputation in the barrio."

Five years ago, Mennonite Central Committee began the library, one of 10 throughout Santa Cruz. But this represents the only one of the libraries connected with a Mennonite church, the Sinai congregation. It became involved in the project with MBM at the initiative of former MBM worker, Stephen "Tig" Intagliata. Margrit continues to oversee operations of the library, where about 40 students come to study each weekday.

Children's clubs: Every Saturday afternoon, Kipfer spends several hours with a group of Sinai neighborhood children. They sing, learn a Bible story, play games and, of course, have a snack. Anywhere from five to 25 children show up each week for the activities. "As soon as they're old enough to walk, they can come to the children's club," Margrit says. "I want to show the kids the people of the Bible and make them real. Then maybe these kids can grow up and become Christians."

Youth groups: On Saturday night, Margrit returns to the Sinai church, about a 15-minute bus ride from her home, for her weekly youth group meeting. This meeting is designed for young people, ages 14 to 25. With a normal attendance of about 25 young adults, Margrit again leads the meeting. The group sings; someone, usually Margrit, gives a brief sermon on a particular Bible passage; then the group divides into quiz teams that try to answer questions based on the sermon. "[We're] working here with kids whose families mostly don't go to church," Kipfer says. "So they don't know the Bible. I believe that teaching the Bible stories to kids and youth lays a solid foundation for faith."

In another area of the city, Margrit works with another set of weekly programs. The neighborhood, known as "Barrio Libertad," is in one of the poorer sections of the city. Recently, with a gift from the Brazilian Mennonite Church, the Bolivian Mennonite Conference bought a lot in Barrio Libertad for use as a future church building site. The conference is waiting only for the city to complete the road and city services out to this lot. Money exists to begin building a meeting place, which will be continued and completed as funds allow.

One of the biggest challenges Margrit faces in working as a Mennonite in Bolivia is people's perceptions of Mennonites.

In Barrio Libertad, Margrit works with a children's club and youth group, similar to the groups in the Sinai church. In addition to these, she gives leadership to several other programs:

Discipleship classes: The youth and adults are placed in separate classes, where established leaders teach biblical foundations of discipleship and faithfulness. "It's difficult for some of them to understand the concept of discipleship," Margrit says. "The Bible and faithfulness to Christ are new ideas for them, so it takes some getting used to."

Church services: Services in Barrio Libertad are small and a church is not established there yet. Until access to the new site is available, a small group continues to meet outside the home of a Christian family in the barrio. "It's hard to have church here until we have a building," Margrit says. "Right now, we have to cancel church every time it rains, which is often."

Youth conferences: Margrit has organized a team of six Christian young people to organize several leadership retreats every year. Thus far the retreats have drawn a large number of young people, 60 to 70 each time. She hopes the fruits of the retreats will last long in the lives of the participants.

One of the biggest challenges Margrit faces in working as a Mennonite in Bolivia is people's perceptions of Mennonites. "The Bolivians don't understand who Mennonites are," she says. "They automatically think of the conservative Mennonite community here. If you tell a Bolivian that you're a Mennonite, they think you're weird."

A relocated group of German Mennonites moved to Bolivia to experience more freedom. They are best known in Bolivia for their contributions to the marketplaces, notably "Queso Menonita" (Mennonite cheese). The group dresses in a traditional conservative European style and works to keep its distance from the Bolivian population.

Still, Margrit believes in the work she's doing and the people she has come to know. "I think I want to be here for a while," she says with a smile. "I like my job and what I'm doing here."

Christy Risser works for Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Ind.

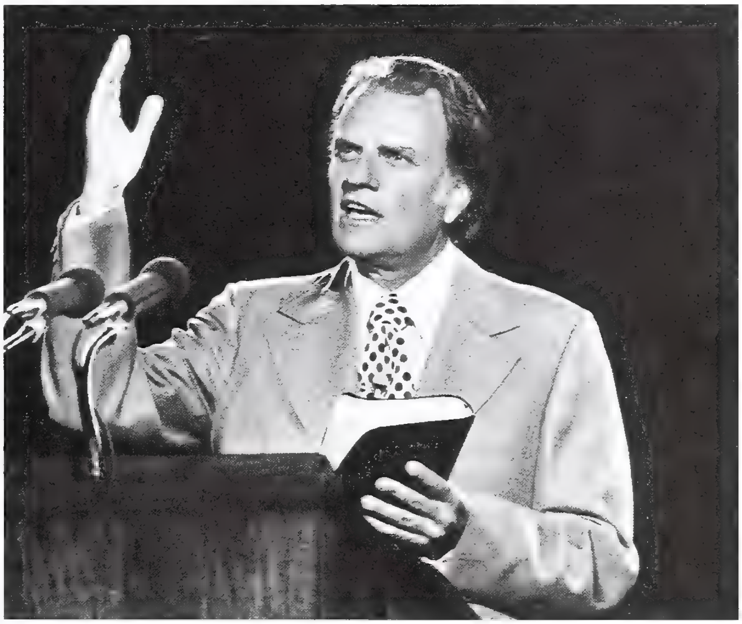
Speaking out

When evangelism is a heresy

Loving God means loving our neighbors and enemies.

Wayne Northey

I grew up with an understanding that evangelism is the premier mission of the church. It was modeled around me in regular evangelistic efforts that our fellowship mounted locally, in others from time to time done cooperatively with a wider network of evangelical churches, and in numerous worldwide efforts, from Billy Graham evangelistic crusades to Literature Crusades (now International Teams), a denominational home-grown agency.


Billy Graham Association

I still believe evangelism is essential to church mission, just as I believe social justice is essential. They are equal yet distinct aspects of the gospel task, as Ron Sider and many others have argued convincingly.

I suggest, however, that much of the evangelistic message of evangelicalism is built upon a faulty, even heretical, anti-Christian, nonbiblical understanding of being human.

The biblical perspective is that we are not ourselves until we find ourselves in the other. The test case for Jesus of a person becoming a true self is love of enemy. Finding Jesus means finding our true selves. It also means it is impossible to find Jesus if we do not find ourselves in the other, supremely in the enemy. Failure to love our neighbor or our enemy, therefore, is failure to love Jesus and ourselves.

The biblical view is that we are created in God's image as people in community, as God is a community of dynamic love between Father, Son and Spirit from before creation.

Love in the New Testament is the ceaseless (Matthew 18:22) attempt to make the enemy a friend (Romans 5:6-11; Ephesians 4:32–5:2), to try without limit to draw a circle of inclusion around the other. Even if, for a time, this means "God also [gives] them up to uncleanness" (Romans 1:24ff KJV) but in order "that the sinful nature may be destroyed and [the] spirit saved" (1 Corinthians 5:5).

Therefore, a "Christian soldier," a "Christian executioner" or any kind of "Christian-cum-destroyer-of-neighbor/enemy" is a contradiction in terms or, baldly stated, a heresy.

So much of the evangelical evangelistic enterprise is precisely that, a false call and choice or decision ("heresy" in the original Greek connotation) to "come to Jesus" independent of the call to "come to ourselves" (what the prodigal son did) precisely in the neighbor or the enemy. There are two great commands, not one: to love God and neighbor/enemy. When the evangelistic call stops at loving Jesus, it is a heresy, as surely as judgment without an offer of grace and forgiveness is a Christian travesty.

When Billy Graham preached love of Jesus to American soldiers in Vietnam but not love of the Viet Cong simultaneously, he was not preaching the gospel. When the world's evangelicals were called to pray for the American servicemen in Vietnam to come to Jesus, for tomorrow they may die, they should have prayed for them for another equally important reason: for tomorrow they may kill. Failure to believe and destroying the enemy are equally denials of the faith (Mark 16:14-16; Romans 13:10; James 2:18 [see context, especially Romans 13:9; James 2:8]).

Much of evangelical evangelism (which I know best since it is my tradition) is a Christian heresy. It is built upon a godless concept of self, independent of the neighbor/enemy.

No wonder so much of contemporary evangelicalism supports or has supported nuclear stockpiling, warfare, capital punishment and many other ways of sacrificing others. It is committed to an explicit inversion of Jesus' desire for "mercy not sacrifice" ((Matthew 9:13; 12:7). It is a denial of the most basic way we are made in God's image. To find God, to find ourselves can only be done in loving the neighbor (1 John 4:18-21). There is no salvation outside the other. There is no Jesus to be found if not in the enemy.

> ***When Billy Graham preached love of Jesus to American soldiers in Vietnam but not love of the Viet Cong simultaneously, he was not preaching the gospel.***

Wayne Northey is director of Victim Offender Ministries with Mennonite Central Committee Canada. He lives in Clearbrook, B.C.

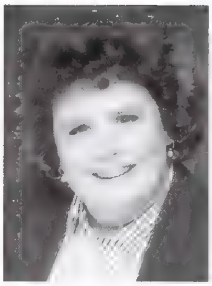
"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Children are people, too

How to talk with your children about death

Concepts to cover and points to remember

Denise Preller



Denise Preller is director of God's Little Acre Preschool at North Danvers Mennonite Church, Danvers, Ill., where she is a member.

In our community recently a young boy died. One mother reported the following conversation with her 4-year-old son:

"Mom, are they going to put that boy in the ground by the school?"

"Yes."

"Isn't he going to be cold?"

"Well, not exactly. He's in heaven now."

"How is he going to get to heaven if he is under the ground?"

As the mother tried answering that last question, she ended up trying to explain the nature of the soul and the reasons we bury bodies, among other subjects. No wonder as parents we rarely, if ever, discuss this subject with our children.

Death is a difficult subject to tackle, and many factors contribute to the problem:

1. Many children have little real experience with death. In the past, children grew up closer to the experience of death. Children witnessed animals being born and dying. Families cared for their own dead, and we invited people to our homes to view the body.

2. Many children have witnessed so many "unnatural deaths" in their television viewing, cartoons, movies and computer games that they have developed an unnatural perception of death.

3. A young child has a concrete thinking ability that makes understanding abstract spiritual concepts troublesome. (Note in the story the young child's concern about temperature and the "body" getting to heaven.)

What can we do? We can work with our children in developing an understanding of some basic spiritual concepts:

1. The difference between a soul and a body: This is a tough one for little ones and will need lots of reinforcement. Some teaching examples:

- Magnets can help illustrate the power of the "unseen." Be sure to extend clearly the analogy that even though they cannot see the power of the magnet, it is there. Just as God is there. Just as our soul is there.

Denise Preller

- Clothes can be used as a visual metaphor for our bodies. Our bodies are just "clothes" for our souls. There are many ways to extend this metaphor. For example, even if we took all the clothes we have and buried them in the back yard, we would not be burying ourselves. (Because children grow so fast, they are in touch with this idea of discarding clothes.)

2. The eternal nature of God and soul: They were with God before they were on earth, and after death they are going back home to live with God again. My son and I imagine him sitting on God's lap before he was born. He pretends to remember looking down from Heaven and picking out the Mom and Dad he wanted to be with on earth. However you go about it, this concept planted in children's hearts can be comforting to them when confronted with a death.

Some general points to remember:

1. Always be as open and honest as possible about matters of death. Children are thinking about it, whether or not they say anything.

2. Be careful what you say in passing. They are listening. "She was better off" or, "He looks like he is sleeping" can set up thinking in a child like "Does Mom think I would be better off dead?" or, "Are they going to wake up?" or, "Will I die if I go to sleep?"

3. Children's biggest fear is not their own death. Their biggest fear is the death of a parent. The odds of you dying before your children die are really small, so it is not lying to reassure your little children that you are not going anywhere. You are always going to be there to take care of them.

One night my son couldn't sleep because he was afraid that I would die. Reasoning with him did little to help. Finally, I pretended to be an old, old woman. I told him all about how I was going to come live at his house, make him take a bath, eat his vegetables and go to bed, even when he had children of his own. I made it sound as if he were never going to get rid of me. He laughed hard, and then was able to sleep. However, there is nothing funny about how deep and scary the thought of his or her parents' deaths is to a child.

> ***The issues of death and dying are tied to our spirituality, and so it is also with children.***

The issues of death and dying are tied to our spirituality, and so it is also with children. If we find that talking to our children about this subject is just too uncomfortable, it may mean that we are in need of a "spiritual check-up" of our own. When we haven't asked and answered for ourselves the difficult questions, we are ill-equipped to answer questions from our children.

Mennonites focus on worship

North Newton, Kan.—Worship matters. Participants at a worship symposium on the Bethel College campus here May 2-4 heard this statement and saw it manifested.

The 216 registrants came from across the United States and Canada. Most were Mennonites, though a number came from Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Congregational and other traditions.

"Let All Within Us Praise," the title of the symposium, comes from the newly released book of Scripture-based dramatic readings and songs by Patricia Shelly, associate professor of Bible and religion and campus pastor at Bethel College. Shelly helped lead several of the six worship sessions at the symposium.

Paul Westermeyer, professor of church music at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., gave the keynote address, "Let All Within Us Praise: And What About Without?" We must all deal with physical realities, he said, whether that is the space in which we worship, the things we use (book, lectern, baptismal, table, bread), what we wear and artistic elements.

Westermeyer emphasized that one should approach one's tradition with a "muscular humility," that is, "whatever we do must be in our language, our tradition," but it must also be "beyond our tradition." Mennonites, he said, need to respond to other traditions without losing their identity.

Marlene Kropf, who is minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and who teaches at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., addressed the topic "Which Way Mennonite Worship?" She made 10 observations about the current state of Mennonite worship and offered three words for the future: mystery, hospitality and sign. (Look for an article based on this presentation in our next issue.)

In his presentation, "God Is the Interesting Thing About Worship," Keith Harder, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., urged listeners to focus on God, not technique, in their worship. He made four propositions about worship:

- Concern for technique should not override the need to worship God.
- We should increase our understanding of what God is doing in worship and raise our expectations for what happens in worship.
- We should enlarge our thinking about worship to include other settings than Sunday morning. ("Instead of a cursory prayer before and after our meetings," he said, "maybe we should pray during our meetings.")
- We should express the communal dimension of worship.

Shelly led a panel discussion of "When Worship Styles Conflict." The panel indicated that while differences may exist between preferred worship styles of youth and adults, those cannot be neatly defined.

"Whatever we do must be in ... our tradition," but it must also be "beyond our tradition."

Paul Westermeyer

Besides hearing talks and joining in worship, participants took in numerous workshops. These addressed a plethora of topics, from Worship as Congregational Care to Scripture Reading as Dramatic Performance to Including Children in Worship to The Art of Worship to Worship Planning Around the Church Year and many more.

At the closing worship, Westermeyer, the designated non-Mennonite speaker, offered "Attempts at Listening," his observations of Mennonites and worship. Many of our concerns, he said, are the same as other Christian groups. "Your peculiar flavor," he said, includes four-part singing, peace and justice, concern for the good rather than the beautiful, a refreshing pacing that is less frenzied than the culture, and a certain gentleness.

Someone asked how we know whether we are worshiping God or

Inside the news

TM appoints new assistant editor / p. 14

Cheese factory goes to Siberia / p. 14

NATO flights double in Labrador / p. 15

MCC discusses workers in violent settings / p. 16

Commentary: United Nations needs support / p. 18

China closes orphanages to foreigners / p. 19

Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont., will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a weekend party Aug. 2-4. The event will include a reunion brunch for former voluntary service workers, a talent show and a concert given by Chuck Neufeld. For information on lodging and a registration form contact Welcome Inn, 40 Wood St., Hamilton, ON L8L 3Y3; (905) 525-5824; fax (905) 525-6873; e-mail (this event only): marion@icom.ca.

● ● ●

Following severe floods last year, North Korea launched an unprecedented appeal to the world for help in feeding its people until the next harvest. The response has been lukewarm. To help fill the gap, Mennonite Central Committee, through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, sent 1,000 metric tons of rice that arrived in North Korea last month. Only 15,000 additional tons of food aid from other relief agencies was set to arrive in North Korea in April. A second 1,000 metric tons of grain was scheduled to arrive in May, when only 2,000 metric tons of other relief food was expected. MCC is also sending canned meat worth $54,432 U.S. ($74,300 Cdn.) to North Korea. According to Ann Martin, MCC East Asia secretary, North Korean officials have begun stressing "quantity of food, not quality, as important. People just need something to fill their stomachs."

Swedish superstore Ahlens has banned war toys from its shops. The store directors decided to not stock goods that reflect violence, sexism and discrimination. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

• • •

The German coffee company Eduscho has set guidelines for its TV and radio advertisements which prohibit commercials in shows containing violence, horror and sexism. The guidelines have been in place two years. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

• • •

The ninth annual gathering of the Network of Biblical Storytellers will take place July 24-27 near Dayton, Ohio. The theme for the event is "Ancestors in Faith: A Mirror to Life —Exploring Love, Power and Pain in the Stories of David." The gathering is an ecumenical festival of storytelling, workshops and speakers for laity and clergy interested in the power and pleasure of storytelling for worship, education and spiritual life. For information contact NOBS, 1810 Harvard Blvd., Dayton, OH 45406, 1-800-355-NOBS, e-mail nobsint@aol.com.

• • •

When Mennonite Central Committee workers in the remote area of Bwadlorens, Haiti, asked area pastors if they would be interested in organizing a showing of the film "Jesus," interest ran high. Some 800 to 1,000 people crammed into the Roman Catholic church in Bwadlorens to view the film on March 23. "Jesus" has been available in Haitian Creole for a couple of years, says Dan Wiens, MCC Haiti director. Pastors are noting that people who saw the film are asking new questions about their personal faith. The event seems to have created a new interest in the life of Christ within the community.

Gordon Houser

Physical realities: *Joanna Pinkerton of Wichita, Kan., performs a liturgical dance.*

ourselves. Think about direction, Westermeyer said. If you want to hold on to four-part singing no matter what, like a museum piece, then that's idolatry.

He agreed with a comment by Kropf that worship matters and can speak to our culture's growing hunger for God. *Gordon Houser*

TM appoints new assistant editor

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Melanie A. Zuercher, Elkhart, Ind., will be the new assistant editor for *The Mennonite* effective June 1. She replaces Larry Penner, who resigned April 1.

Zuercher

Zuercher is close to completing a Master of Divinity degree at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. She received a bachelor's degree in English, with a minor in communications, from Goshen (Ind.) College in 1983.

"My church institutional experience has been largely in the context of the Mennonite Church. I am excited about working for the General Conference Mennonite Church and being a part of the difficult and exhilarating process of moving toward merger of the two denominations," she says. "I see the Mennonite publications as vital to this process, particularly in providing a forum for dialogue."

Zuercher worked as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer and then as paid staff for a social justice organization in Kentucky from 1986 to 1992. She was assistant editor for *Festival Quarterly* from 1983 to 1986.

As part of her seminary studies, she recently served as an intern with Mennonite Board of Missions, and last summer she interned with the General Conference communications office.

Zuercher attends Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church in Elkhart. She is a member of Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa.

Cheese factory goes to Siberia

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A disassembled cheese factory, plus boiler, is making its way from Corfu, N.Y., to Neudachino in Siberia, Russia. With its arrival and assembly, townspeople in Neudachino will be able to make cheese from the milk produced by their 800 pure-bred Holsteins.

In 1993, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers Ben and Erna Falk of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., went to Siberia. Leaders of the town of Neudachino, with some 700 people, many of ethnic Mennonite background, had asked for workers to help develop village businesses. They hoped to keep young people at home; in the past four years nearly 40 percent of Neudachino's Mennonite population has immigrated to Germany.

"In 1993, when we placed the Falks, we didn't know Russian agriculture was descending into a crisis from which it has yet to recover," says Walter Bergen, MCC country representative for the former Soviet Union. "Ben and Erna have had the challenging job of walking alongside Neudachino's residents as they struggle to adjust to post-Soviet life."

Village administrators came up with the idea for the cheese factory as a better way of using the 10 tons of milk village cows produce daily. Cheese can be held until transportation is available to get it to market; milk can't.

The village leaders approached the Falks about the possibility, who in turn took it up with MCC administrators. A couple of proposals were considered but in the end proved not feasible. The town was without its cheese factory when the Falks completed their MCC assignment and returned to Canada in early 1995.

In September 1995, the Falks received a call from Neudachino leader Andre Enns. "The village can't survive without some help, any help," Enns told the couple.

"The call galvanized us to action," says Ben. Despite the town's valiant effort to be self-sufficient, the economy around them continued to crumble.

A trip to MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., in January didn't produce an immediate solution for the Falks but it did provide them with a lead. Someone mentioned a businessman named Tony Kutter, who had worked on a cheese project in Russia with the organization Citizens Corps. The Falks stopped to see Kutter, who lives in Corfu, N.Y., on their return to Ontario.

> ***"People in Neudachino couldn't believe we had actually returned ... to help finish what we began."***
>
> **Erna Falk**

"Kutter's first reaction was 'we'll see,' but the more he thought about the project, the more enthusiastic he became. God was at work," Ben says.

Ben and Kutter worked out a rough plan for assembling a basic, low-tech cheese-making operation, using a mix of new and used equipment. "Ben's knowledge of the village along with Kutter's hands-on experience with cheese making proved a providential combination," Bergen says.

Jim Bonfitto of Shillington, Pa., a boiler and burner service contractor, retubed and repaired the boiler and adapted it for liquid propane instead of natural gas. He's hoping someone in Neudachino will be able to make future adjustments and repairs to the boiler. "Siberia is kind of out of our territory," he says.

MCC Europe purchased a used butter churn and cream separator that Swiss Mennonites had located and, with the help of the Aussiedler mission organization Aquilla, transported the items to Siberia.

Meanwhile, the Falks—leaving final details for shipping the disassembled factory in the hands of MCC Akron administrators and Kutter—left for Russia. They accompanied new MCC workers Betty and Bill Peters of Penticton, B.C., who will stay in Neudachino for two years. MCC plans to keep personnel in Neudachino and the region to assist with ongoing development efforts. After prayer with the MCC team at the Moscow train station, they set off on their 55-hour journey to Neudachino.

"People in Neudachino couldn't believe we had actually returned," says Erna. "They thought we'd not to able to make it back to help finish what we began." Some villagers did not believe the project would really come to pass, she adds. But even the skeptics were convinced when the butter churn and cream separator arrived from Europe on April 10.

The next day Ben and village men poured a concrete floor in a former 6-by 12-meter child care center, now to become a cheese factory.

And on April 25, the U.S. equipment —from huge boiler down to individual cheese hoops—left Baltimore destined for Hamburg, Germany. From there it will be trucked to Neudachino.

Numerous individuals, as well as the German government, which has indicated it will cover freight costs to get all the equipment to Siberia, are contributing the funds to allow this approximately $46,000 U.S. ($63,000 Cdn.) initiative to be realized.

"MCC is at its best when we enable volunteers [with] practical experience to solve problems alongside local partners with creative ideas," Bergen says. "This time, a cheese plant happened to be that creative idea." *Emily Will*

NATO flights in Labrador double

Winnipeg (MCCC)—Angry. Tired. Frustrated.

Those are some of the words that express how the Innu of Labrador feel about the recent decision to double NATO training flights in that region.

"We've been fighting this issue for a long time," says Daniel Ashini, director of rights and environment for the Innu Nation. "It's been very energy consuming."

The fight began in 1980, when the Innu started protesting low-level NATO flight training in Labrador. The Innu have argued that the flights, which find jet aircraft flying as low as 100 feet over the ground, threaten their way of life in the country and

The Mennonite received two awards at the Associated Church Press annual meeting in April. The magazine received an Award of Excellence for Jean Janzen's poem, "Chicken Guts" (Sept. 12, 1995, issue, page 11) and an Award of Merit for convention coverage of Wichita '95 (Aug. 22, 1995, issue). The Associated Church Press is composed of some 200 religious publications in North America.

• • •

Three thousand military deserters from countries of the former Soviet Union are waiting for asylum in Germany. Soldiers who left the army because of war cruelties in Chechnya have to face bad physical treatment and even capital punishment. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

• • •

The Oakland, Calif., police force recently unveiled its first "low-rider" police car. The vehicle has chrome wheels, hydraulic lifts and a 500-watt sound system. The car was put on the force to help officers build better relationships with inner-city kids. (*Encounter*)

• • •

Zaire Mennonite Church (CMZ) leaders met with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission leaders March 19-21 in Elkhart, Ind., to review their 1989 agreement and develop a new one. The CMZ leaders emphasized their desire for continued missionary presence in Zaire for partnership ministry, and requested continued financial, spiritual and material help. They highlighted strengths and weaknesses in the North American church, appreciating the strong Sunday school program which involves people of all ages. They cautioned that to North Americans time has become an idol, and this is even true in the church. People are in a hurry to worship so they can go on to other things. CMZ has over 80,000 members in 900 congregations. (AIMM)

Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute closed its doors April 28, after celebrating 60 years of service as a Bible school for Alberta and Saskatchewan.

• • •

Lawrence Hart, Mennonite pastor from Clinton, Okla., was one of a group selected to read victims' names in a ceremony at the site of the former Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building April 19 marking the anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing. One of Hart's friends, Susan Ferrell, died in the blast. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

An international, multifaith group of bicyclists, including Mennonites, will ride through Israel and Jordan in November to benefit the Nazareth Hospital. The 250-mile ride is the fifth ride organized by The Nazareth Project to benefit the hospital, which provides medical care in Nazareth. For more information, call The Nazareth Project at (717) 859-1389.

• • •

Over $200,000 was raised for Mennonite Central Committee at the West Coast Mennonite Sale and Auction, April 12-13 in Fresno, Calif. Nearly $3,500 of this was from the sale of Nicaraguan hammocks, purchased with funds donated by MCC workers in Nicaragua. The hammocks were made by artisans in a business endeavor assisted by Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is asking for prayers for the people of Burundi and for MCC's five workers there. Christian leaders are potential targets because of their ethnicity or activities in working for reconciliation and peace. MCC workers, while not primary targets, could find themselves caught in cross fire or in an ambush. As of April 29, MCC was not considering evacuating its workers in Burundi, as Burundians say their presence is important in preventing a bloodbath.

have a negative impact on the herds of caribou, which they hunt for food.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada has supported the Innu in their attempt to stop the flights, providing personnel who have worked with the community in a variety of ways as well as publicizing their cause across Canada.

But on Feb. 20 the Canadian government announced that it had signed a 10-year deal with its NATO allies to double the number of flights over Labrador and eastern Quebec. Under the terms of the deal, Canadian, British, German and Dutch air forces will be able to increase the number of flights from 7,000 a year to 15,000.

> ***"The economy of Happy Valley-Goose Bay has always been considered more important than the Innu way of life."***
>
> **Daniel Ashini**

The decision follows the result of a government-requested environmental impact study, which recommends that the flights avoid Innu camps and certain caribou grazing grounds. But the Innu refused to participate in the review. "The process was stacked against us," says Ashini. "The economy of Happy Valley-Goose Bay has always been considered more important than the Innu way of life."

The flights are estimated to bring over $100 million (Cdn.) to the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area, site of the Canadian forces base.

Ashini says there is some talk of renewed protest when the flights begin in spring. "But people are tired and frustrated. They have many other pressing issues to deal with also. We can't stay with this one forever."

Among the pressing issues is the giant nickel deposit discovered at Voisey's Bay on the Labrador coast. The deposit, worth billions of dollars, has the potential to affect the life of the Innu in a far greater way than the flights. "People are frightened and concerned by the potential impacts of the mining," Ashini says. "We need to reach an agreement [with the mining company] which protects the Innu and the environment."

Although the Innu would like to see an end to the flights, Ashini concedes that isn't likely to happen. "But if the Department of National Defense would be willing to negotiate seriously with us, give us more input into the number of flights and where the planes fly, we would be willing to go to our people to seek approval for such an agreement."

Nelson Scheifele, who directs MCC's activities in Labrador, says the increase in the number of flights is a defeat, but the efforts to halt them also brought benefits.

"The Innu didn't stop the flights, but they stuck with it and stuck together for a long time," he says. "They learned a lot about how to deal with these kinds of issues. It has better prepared them for dealing with the mining companies."

In 1990 the Innu achieved a significant victory when NATO decided against building a large-scale tactical training center at Happy Valley-Goose Bay. "That would have had a great impact on them," Scheifele says.

For people in southern Canada who have supported the Innu in their effort to halt the flights, Ashini says, "Keep up hope—it's not a lost cause yet."
John Longhurst

MCC discusses workers in violent settings

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—"I've been shot at, ridiculed and terrorized," Bonnie Bergey told the Mennonite Central Committee executive committee during its April 19-20 meeting here. "I've heard machine guns, land mines, bazookas, grenades and many other evil things," Bergey recounted. Bergey, who served as MCC's and Eastern Mennonite Mission's country representative to Somalia from 1991 to 1995, organized MCC's aid efforts and facilitated peace conferences during Somalia's civil war and famine. She is a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Bergey shared "moments of terror" as she encountered men in "technicals," trucks mounted with machine guns, experienced the death of friends and made difficult decisions about which refugees to assist. Her presentation, which included poetry, was met with a moment of silence as board members absorbed the impact. "Is it unfair of MCC to ask someone to go into a situation like this?" asked Abe

Wiebe, MCC board member from Winkler, Man. "It was my own choice to be there. I never felt MCC expected more of me than I was willing to give. I didn't feel alone; I felt the support of the church," replied Bergey. "I would encourage more people to be vulnerable like this, to stand with our brothers and sisters around the world."

Bergey said she found strength through writing and her relationships with other aid workers and Mennonite volunteers in the region. Dave Cressman, MCC board member from Kitchener, Ont., asked, "What is an acceptable level of risk? Where do we draw the line at exposing workers to risk?"

Eric Olfert, MCC Africa co-secretary, responded that it is difficult to assess risk just as it is difficult to measure the impact of work like Bergey's, which he said was important in building a foundation for peace in Somalia, although it may be "many years before we see the full fruits."

The board reiterated that MCC will continue to place workers in violent settings, and reviewed the guidelines to be followed. These include consulting with local partners, appointing willing workers who possess adequate spiritual resources and providing administrative support.

Although the board did not discuss how increasing crime affects workers, this was the topic at a recent meeting at MCC's headquarters. Program administrators concluded workers face a new level of vulnerability and pondered how MCC can support them. At the same time, they saw the importance of MCC workers standing by partners who live in difficult situations.

Over the past year, in Africa alone, three MCC houses were burglarized by armed men, 12 workers were held up and five vehicles stolen, some at gunpoint. In January Jim Shenk, MCC Africa co-secretary, was visiting MCC workers in Lesotho when a gang of armed robbers surrounded the house. The MCC workers used a refrigerator to barricade themselves into a room while the house was ransacked.

"Although the majority of MCC workers never have this kind of experience, it does represent a growing trend created in part by the increasing gap between the economically rich and poor. In some countries police forces are ineffective or even involved in these crimes," says Shenk. "It raises the question: To what extent should we hire security services and build higher walls?"

MCC workers are expected to "lessen temptation by reducing our material standard of living." And MCC recommends that workers "live lightly with the possessions we do have, being willing to give them up rather than defend them."

Continued next page

MVS associate director resigns

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Kathy Landis, Newton, has resigned from her position as Mennonite Voluntary Service associate director for the western United States effective June 30. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Landis

Landis has shared the position with her husband, Miles Reimer, since July 1994. She resigned when Reimer accepted his appointment as MVS director effective July 1.

From April 1990 to June 1994, Landis worked full-time as the MVS associate director for units in the western United States. Prior to that she worked as a construction worker and canoe guide. Originally from Tunkhannock, Pa., Landis has a bachelor's degree in nutrition and art from Goshen (Ind.) College. She is a member of New Creation Fellowship, Newton. Her future plans are uncertain.

"I value my experience in working with the church and its outreach. It has given me the opportunity to walk with people as they experience joy, struggles, life changes, forgiveness and God's leading" says Landis.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., will host a symposium, "Gordon Kaufman's Theology as Imaginative Construction," Nov. 3-4, on the Bethel campus. Kaufman, son of former Bethel president E.G. Kaufman, is a theologian and professor of divinity at Harvard Divinity School. The symposium will celebrate the publication of *Theology in Face of Modernity: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Kaufman*, published by the Mennonite Library and Archives. For more information, contact Duane Friesen at (316) 284-5260.

• • •

The periodicals integration committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) met in Kansas City, Mo., May 10-11. The committee made the following recommendations to the GC Division of General Services, MC Mennonite Publishing House, the General Board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and Mennonite Publishing Service Board: (1) merger of *The Mennonite* and *Gospel Herald* into a publication for the integrated Mennonite church, with primary responsibility for the U.S. context; (2) development of the paper now known as *Mennonite Reporter* into a publication for the integrated Mennonite church, with primary responsibility for the Canadian context; (3) creation of a governance board for each publication that reflects its primary constituency, with structural linkages to the integrated Mennonite church to be resolved; (4) cooperation between these publications and their boards to promote a singular denominational identity that includes common graphic identity, at least 25 percent common content, possibility of occasional joint issues, and editorial assumptions that reflect the vision and mission of the integrated Mennonite church.

Still, the dilemma of how many security precautions to take remains. "How do we find the appropriate line between naivete and being overly concerned and building the walls too high?" asks Shenk.

MCC in Africa is considering appointing MCCers who can be called on to "de-brief" MCC workers within 72 hours of a traumatic experience. Shenk said MCC should not underestimate the long-term effect of trauma. "These experiences can jump up five, even 10 years later. MCC and local congregations must remain supportive." *Pearl Sensenig*

Shirley Hershey Showalter has been named the 14th president of Goshen (Ind.) College, beginning Jan. 1, 1997. She has been a member of Goshen's faculty since 1976. She replaces Victor Stoltzfus, who has been president since 1984.

• • •

The Meserete Kristos (Mennonite) Church in Ethiopia has grown 150 percent in five years and conducted about 50,000 baptisms, reports David W. Shenk of Eastern Mennonite Missions. He visited Ethiopia recently and says, "Much of the momentum for church planting is carried by young people." The MKC provides six weeks of intensive discipleship training for high school graduates, whereupon the young people go on one- to three-year church planting assignments. Some go on to become pastors and evangelists. The MKC has 83,380 members in 130 congregations and 364 church-planting centers.

• • •

Mennonites will be at the Olympic Summer Games, July 19-Aug. 4. The Peace Factory will be in the heart of the "Olympic Ring" at the Trinity United Methodist Church located between the Georgia Dome, the Olympic Village and the new Olympic Stadium. It is estimated that 85,000 visitors will pass that location daily, many of them from foreign countries. A coalition of churches, including Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship and Berea Mennonite Church, are working to find volunteers with counseling, organizing and linguistic skills and the financial backing needed for this. Hospitality for Peace Factory volunteers will be provided at Berea Mennonite Church, where summer workers from Mennonite colleges are staying. Visitors with recreational vehicles will be able to park on church property in exchange for a donation toward the Peace Factory effort. For more information contact Vernon Schertz at (404) 758-3096; e-mail: verbetz@aol.com; or Jonathan Larson at (404) 636- 7915; e-mail: jonpaull@aol.com.

COMMENTARY

United Nations: Expanding need, contracting support

John Rempel and Rebecca Kauffman

New York—If there were no United Nations, we would have to create one.

U.N. institutions are clearing land mines in several countries, advocating for the just treatment of women and children, and developing agriculture, to name a few activities. Over the past 50 years the United Nations has accomplished much, including negotiating 172 settlements to end regional conflicts, eradicating smallpox and helping 45 countries hold fair elections.

The United Nations is the basis for international cooperation. International legal obligation—from the law of the sea to reporting arms sales—helps nations of the world relate to each other. Without them, the misunderstandings and threats that sometimes explode into war would do so more often.

Yet just as the United Nations enters its second half century, many countries, including the United States, are withholding financial support. Both war-torn countries and wealthy countries are pressing for more peacekeeping operations but are refusing to pay for them.

Twenty members of the U.S. Congress support a bill to withdraw the United States from the United Nations, and to demand the United Nations leave the United States. But surveys show the American public, across party and ideological lines, strongly affirms the United Nations' role in world affairs.

> ***If there were no United Nations, we would have to create one.***

The United States annually spends $1,000 per capita on military defense, compared to $7 per capita on the United Nations. This imbalance also holds true in some other countries. The estimated world military budget in 1994 was $767 billion; in that year the United Nations' agencies spent $18 billion.

Many poorer countries see the United Nations as their best advocate with wealthy nations and threatening neighbors. U.N. priorities include sustainable development and nonviolent peace-building. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) shares these priorities.

As Christians, we do not let national borders regulate who we love or where we work. Therefore, we affirm the United Nations' emphasis on the right of every human being and every culture to a dignified, sustainable existence. The United Nations respects national sovereignty and puts responsibility for action on national governments. Where natural disasters or discriminatory trade practices by rich countries create crises, the United Nations negotiates for charity and justice. U.N. money, programs and people work worldwide to rebuild communities and facilitate dialogue.

Each U.N. member's dues are determined by the country's gross national product. Since the United States has become increasingly delinquent in paying its dues, 25 percent of the United Nations' regular budget, the United Nations may be forced to close several urgently needed programs by mid-year.

Let your elected officials know that as a Christian you support the United Nations' goals and that you want an efficient United Nations, one that has enough resources to provide alternatives to the scourge of war. *John Rempel is pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship and is MCC liaison to the United Nations. Rebecca Kauffman is serving as a U.N. intern.*

China closes orphanages to foreigners

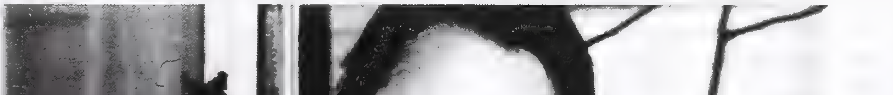
Harrisonburg, Va. (CEE)—In response to Western criticism of its orphanages, the Chinese government has shut its doors to foreigners wishing to work in Chinese orphanages. As a result, China Educational Exchange (CEE) will not be able to place a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored occupational therapist at an orphanage in Sichuan province. (See Feb. 27 issue of *The Mennonite*, page 15.)

It is much more difficult for foreigners in China to visit orphanages, including several CEE teachers who spend time each week with handicapped children.

A documentary aired by the British Broadcasting Company first raised Western awareness of poor conditions at Chinese orphanages. A subsequent Human Rights Watch report accused orphanage officials of intentionally allowing certain children to die. The report relied on orphanage documents showing extremely high mortality rates, and on the testimony of a former orphanage employee.

The Chinese government has reacted defensively to criticism of its orphanages, which are often homes for abandoned children. The government has opened only a few orphanages to foreign inspection, questioned the credibility of former orphanage employees who have spoken about conditions, and circulated articles about U.S. crime and child abuse. Chinese publications have run stories about how Chinese volunteers and charity programs are improving conditions.

The Amity Foundation, a Christian relief and social service agency and CEE's main partner, has worked to improve orphanage conditions around Nanjing, China, for the past 10 years. Amity criticizes the Human Rights Watch report because it distorts the fact that insufficient funding is a basic problem in China's social service sector. This results in low worker morale and poor facilities. The Human Rights Watch report gives the impression that allowing children to die is a widespread practice, but Amity believes these incidents are isolated, not government policy. *Myrrl Byler*



MCC photo

Closed doors: *China Educational Exchange teacher Jeanette Hanson of Laird, Sask., holds babies at a Chinese orphanage.*

Kelowna (B.C.) Gospel Fellowship celebrated its 35th anniversary on Feb. 18. The celebration theme was "O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come." Larry Schram is the current pastor.

• • •

The People's Place Gallery, Intercourse, Pa., will host its annual arts weekend, "Art '96." The event will include a juried exhibition by Mennonite-related artists, judged by Erma Martin Yost, Jersey City, N.J., and Robert Regier, North Newton, Kan. Artists are invited to submit slides of three works completed in the past two years. Two- and three-dimensional work is welcome. Slides must be received by July 1. For information contact Renny Magill at 1-800-762-7171 or (717) 768-7171.

• • •

"Finding Balance in Life and Ministry" was the theme for the annual Youth Ministry Council (YMC) held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, April 24-28. Approximately 40 Mennonite youth ministers and church-wide personnel from Canada, the United States and Puerto Rico attended. The participants heard reports from the youth ministers. Personnel from church agencies joined the council for the second half of its meeting. Faith & Life Press representatives from Newton, Kan., reported on the current financial position and the reason for recent staff cutbacks. Downsizing plans initially included the discontinuation of *YouthGuide*. However, FLP personnel explained, the youth leaders' resource would be given another chance if the youth ministers would be willing to buy subscriptions out of their offices for distribution to churches. A quick survey of the council indicated strong interest in providing that kind of support. Other agenda included discussion of a youth mission video, the adoption of racism as a theme at next year's Youth Ministry Council in Orlando, Fla., and a report from Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa. ***from a report by Carol Duerksen***

Record

Christian education resource people from eight area conferences of the General Conference Mennonite Church met April 18-21 in Portland, Ore., for their annual meeting. They received training in workshop design and development based on adult learning principles, and developed a number of workshop outlines.

• • •

Thirteen Mennonite artists have created pieces of art based on New Testament personalities that are for use in the church. The collection has been traveling around North America and was recently introduced in *Builder*. Some of the New Testament characters are Aquilla and Priscilla, portrayed by Mahlon Schmucker using broken farm implement parts; John the Baptist, by Chad Friesen, who painted the portrait while on his stomach; shepherds and sheep by Herb Weaver using plumbing parts. For information on the traveling exhibit or purchasing one of the art works, contact Lara Hall at (412) 887-8500; e-mail lara%mph@mcimail.com.

• • •

Glendon Klaassen, North Newton, Kan., will no longer be the secretary for Latin America for the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church effective June 1. He has worked in this position since 1981. Klaassen will be replaced by Gregory Rake, who has been appointed as the Latin America administrator for COM and Mennonite Board of Missions. Rake, who currently resides in Quito, Ecuador, will work out of MBM's office in Elkhart, Ind. "My work has been delightful as I have made hundreds of friends and seen God work through many brothers and sisters in Latin America. With Gregory's appointment COM will continue to have strong solidarity with the people in Latin America, and help COM and MBM share a significant role in global missions," says Klaassen, who will continue to serve as COM executive secretary.

MINISTERS

Wes Bergen is teaching pastor at New Creation Fellowship Church, Newton, Kan.

Cindy Breeze was licensed and installed as minister of worship and Christian education at First Church, Champaign-Urbana, Ill., April 28.

Omar Cortes will end his service as pastor at First United Spanish Mennonite Church, Vancouver, this summer. He and his wife, Esther, will go to Chili as Commission on Overseas Mission workers.

Bob Cottrill was installed as pastor at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., May 5.

Halvin Falk will be youth pastor at Mennonite Church of Vernon, B.C., beginning June 1.

Kevin Farmwald was ordained as pastor at First Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio, Feb. 4.

Willmar Harder, First Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., will serve Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan., as ministry inquiry intern this summer.

J.D. Hershberger will be minister of worship at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, beginning July 1.

Ericka and **Jorge Hoajaca** will be pastors at First United Spanish Mennonite Church, Vancouver, beginning in July.

Benny Ip will be assistant pastor at Vancouver Chinese Church beginning July 1.

Jeff Nickel will leave youth ministry at Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C., in August.

Carlos Siemens will end his youth ministry at Olivet Church, Abbotsford, B.C., this summer.

Sydney Stigge, Newton, Kan., will serve Boulder (Colo.) Church as ministry inquiry intern this summer.

John Unrau was installed as pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Abbotsford, B.C., April 28.

Marvin and **Tanell Wirzba** were installed April 28 as pastors at Black Creek (B.C.) United Mennonite Church.

Correction: **Dave Esau** (not Dan) is associate pastor at Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver.

WORKERS

Gladys and **Peter Buller**, Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind., will work with the International Protestant Church in Kinshasa, Zaire, beginning July 1. The Bullers were General Conference missionaries in Zaire for over 35 years.

G. Buller

P. Buller

Scott Neufeld-Wall, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., has received an Elmer Ediger Memorial Scholarship, to continue his studies in social work.

John E. Toews was installed as president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., April 21.

Busy?
Sight impaired?
Get
THE Mennonite
on cassette.
Call **1-800-757-5101.**

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor** to begin July 1. Primary duties include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and resume, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7535; fax (219) 535-7609; e-mail: martyel@goshen.edu; web site: http://www.goshen.edu**. Application deadline: **May 24**, 1996, or until the position is filled. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Director of business affairs—Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Experience with business office functions, computer operations and personnel supervision is required.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

La Casa de Maria y Marta (The Mary/Martha House), San Antonio, Texas, is seeking a **director** beginning Jan. 1, 1997. La Casa is a service/learning center operated by the San Antonio Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions. Responsibilities include setting up and working with short-term service groups, maintenance of facilities, fund-raising and other administrative tasks. Salaried position with housing provided. Spanish-speaking person preferred but not required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Contact **John Lichty, 602 Mission St., San Antonio, TX 78210; (210) 534-2064.**

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has openings for a **biology instructor**, **Spanish instructor** (70 percent), and a **director of alumni relations** (50 percent).

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Science center technician/chemical hygiene officer: Equivalent to three-quarter-time for 10 months; bachelor's degree with major in a laboratory science with a minimum of 16 SH of chemistry. Responsible to maintain equipment and inventories in the science center and assist in the technical operations of science instrumentation, the computer center, the museum, the planetarium, the greenhouse and the vivarium. As chemical hygiene officer, will be in charge of implementing and updating the institution's chemical hygiene plan. Multiethnic people and women are especially encouraged to apply. Application deadline: **May 31**.

If interested, please contact **Eastern Mennonite University Human Resources Office at (540) 432-4108; e-mail: EbyBJ@EMU.Edu.**

Partnership in Mission & Evangelism:

Preparing for the 21st Century

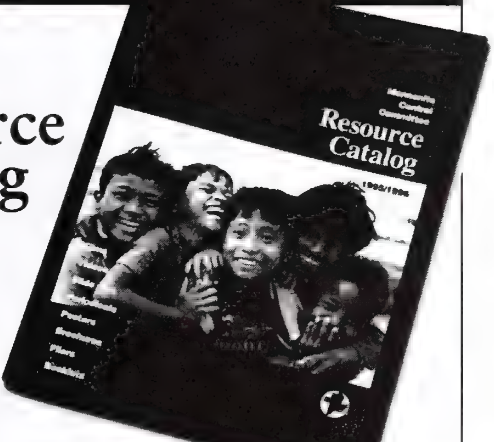
July 19-21, 1996

A weekend conference exploring new models of partnership in mission and evangelism. More than 20 presenters—pastors, mission workers, and mission agency leaders—will share from their experience around the world.

Cost: $45, *includes three meals.*
Location: Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary,
3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, Indiana

To register, call the Continuing Education office at **AMBS, 219 295-3726.**

MCC
Resource
Catalog



Lists free-loan audiovisuals and printed materials about the mission of MCC, care of creation, lifestyle, peace and justice issues, hunger and other topics. Includes a children's section. Yours free from:

Mennonite Central Committee

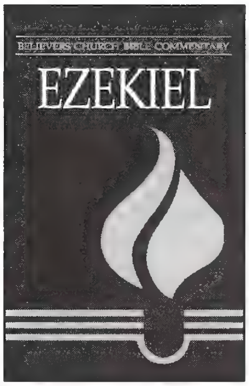
Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

A Lamp Unto Thy Feet

Ezekiel

By **Millard C. Lind**
The Lord's urgent words through Ezekiel call Israel to be a spiritual and moral exemplar to the nations. Today believers still need these themes of God's presence, covenant, victorious rule, concern for the nations, and cleansing for worship and obedience.
Paper, 416 pages, $19.95; in Canada $28.50.



Ezekiel is volume eight in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series. Other volumes include: ***Acts***; ***Colossians, Philemon***; ***Daniel***; ***1 and 2 Thessalonians***; ***Genesis***; ***Jeremiah***; and ***Matthew***.

For more information about the BCBC series, please call
1 800 759-4447.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com http://www.mph.lm.com/hp.html

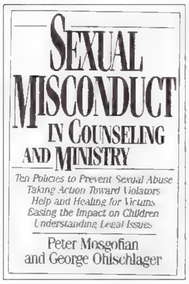
Reviews

BOOKS

A CANCER IN THE CHURCH

Sexual Misconduct in Counseling and Ministry *by Peter Mosgofian and George Ohlschlager (Word, 1995, 350 pages)*

Reviewed by Ruth Isaac Wiederkehr, Canfield, Ont.


SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN COUNSELING AND MINISTRY

Ten Policies to Prevent Sexual Abuse
Taking Action Toward Violators
Help and Healing for Victims
Easing the Impact on Children
Understanding Legal Issues

Peter Mosgofian
and George Ohlschlager

It's natural to want to turn away from the reality that sexual exploitation by pastors, counselors and other trusted helpers is a tragically widespread cancer in the North American church. Yet face that reality we must. As the authors repeatedly demonstrate, when the church fails to deal justly and caringly with victims and abusers in its midst, the results are devastating. Not only is the moral integrity vital to a life-giving witness to Christ undermined, but now the state is increasingly stepping in, taking legal control of irresponsible churches and enacting harsh punishments upon the violators, thereby making healing, reconciliation and restoration next to impossible.

Thus the authors write out of a profound care for both the church and for the whole society for whom the church is to be a living beacon. Mosgofian and Ohlschlager's Christian faith, their quest for justice and wholeness for all people, their fear for a church that prefers to live with its moral eyes covered, and their extensive training and experience in counseling shape this starkly honest and prophetic book. Through the book, the authors seek to offer a comprehensive, down-to-earth and practical reference-style resource on sexualized abuse of power, its fallout, and how to work toward healing and prevention of further such sinful destruction of people and relationships. And to a large extent they succeed, though at times they offer creative suggestions for changes and growth needed in our churches and communities without offering specific ways to help that happen.

Major segments within the book deal with the sexual revolution which has transformed North American thinking and lifestyles during the past 30 or 40 years, forbidden sexual involvement between adults and against children, Protestant and Catholic church policies and how in practice congregations typically follow or reject such policies, ethical issues and (American) legal developments relative to preventing further abuse of people, and helping sexual violators both before and after falling into sexual sin against people who trust them. A diverse and strong bibliography supports the book.

Writing from within the Christian church, the authors wrestle theologically with human nature and sinfulness, and offer their theological understanding of what renders Christian leaders so susceptible to sexual sinning against the very people entrusted to their care. Central to their perspective is that much sinning grows out of broken people seeking to mend themselves independently of God. While the authors' theology is wholesome, it is troubling that many of their theological assertions fail to be undergirded by specific scriptural examples. So it goes throughout the book: While the book contains numerous scriptural references, the Bible is used somewhat simplistically. The authors treat the Bible more as a straightforward manual for daily living than as the varied testimony to a people's relationship with God that it is.

For a book dealing with abuses of power and influence, *Sexual Misconduct* does contain one grievous and puzzling fault: Even as the authors mourn and decry the destructiveness of patriarchy, they fail to use inclusive language throughout most of the book. Other evidences of hasty editorial work surface with frustrating frequency as well.

Nonetheless, Mosgofian and Ohlschlager offer the church a valuable, readable resource for those who seek honestly to wrestle with and understand some of the real sins that we who form the church so frequently attempt to whitewash, to everyone's destruction. It will be a book useful for both clergy and laity who truly seek to love God and the church.

LONGING TO DIE

Caregiver's Gethsemane: When a Loved One Longs to Die *by Cecile Bauer (Paulist Press, 1995, 130 pages)*

Reviewed by Mary Dyck, Hesston, Kan.

GOING TO...

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE

India
1997

TourMagination offers two tours that include
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE:

Adventure to India .... Dec. 28, 1996 – Jan. 17, 1997
Adventure to India & Indonesia .... Jan. 1-23, 1997

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

"No matter whether the patient is child, parent, sibling, or spouse, watching a loved one die is a personal Gethsemane. Even as Christ begged to be spared the cup of suffering, so too caregivers pray that their loved ones will be spared a painful death. It is especially difficult for caregivers when the loved one cries out in pain, asking to be released from this seemingly endless time of suffering."

The issues of terminal illness—how it affects the faith of all concerned, the relationships among family members and the endurance of caregivers—are dealt with openly and candidly. The author shares deeply from her own personal journal written during the time of her mother's terminal illness and subsequent death.

The book is arranged in short chapters, each one beginning with a Scripture passage and ending with a prayer expressing the feelings, anxieties, fears and longings of the caregivers and their loved ones.

The author identifies closely with Job and the psalmist as she prays for courage when feelings of guilt, hopelessness, anger and pain threaten to overwhelm her. The words of the psalmist, "Wait for the Lord with courage; be stout-hearted and wait for the Lord," comfort and strengthen the caregiver in the face of increasing pain, and the helpless dependence of the sick person on the caregiver.

This book is written in language and terminology that is well suited to the lay reader and would be useful for the church library. The book may be used as a devotional resource for someone struggling with a terminal illness or for the loved ones caring for the ill person. I found it difficult to put the book down after reading the first chapter. The author is in touch with all the feelings and emotions families and loved ones go through as they struggle with a painful and often lengthy illness.

Many people find it difficult to identify or express the various feelings and emotions they experience in a given situation. This book could be used by a Sunday school class or small group as a resource or discussion starter in dealing with life and death issues.

As a person who has been a caregiver of a loved one during a difficult illness and death and who has walked with many as they struggle through this difficult time, I recommend this as a helpful book to recognize and name those issues and feelings experienced at a time of terminal illness.

A word of caution is necessary for those who choose or naturally assume the role of caregiver. One could get the impression reading this book that it is or could be the sole responsibility of the family to care for the dying person, relying on God for strength, no matter what the cost or what sacrifices have to be made. It is not always wise or humanly feasible for the family to be the sole caregiver. As indicated by the author, it would be wise to seek advice and help from local agencies such as hospice, the church and/or clergy, if at all possible.

THE CHURCH AND HISTORY

The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical *by John Howard Yoder (Eerdmans, 1994, 388 pages)*

Reviewed by Daniel Liechty, Havertown, Pa.

This book gathers 17 of John Howard Yoder's essays from the past 40 years that focus on the nature of the church. This is helpful because Yoder tends to produce ad hoc writings and lectures which then often appear in obscure journals. Each of these essays is stimulating, but presented together in thematic order there is a depth of message that is more than the sum of its parts.

Yoder particularly presses the theme of the "Constantinianization" of the church and the results this has had on common sense notions of what the church is about in this world. Yoder rethinks the meaning of God's work in history through the church in light of Christ's Lordship. That is, in terms that do not assume that the Constantinian synthesis of church and state power was either an inevitable result of or faithful to the Lordship of Christ.

In Yoder's view the church is nothing less than God's ongoing message of reconciliation in the world. Both Catholic (universal) and always in the process of being Reformed, the church is a dynamic work of God that lives out its mission in ever-changing cultural and historical circumstances. As such, the church never achieves a final, ideal or perfect form on this side of the eschaton. By remaining faithful to the basic teachings of Christ and the apostolic model, the church is the bearer of political and social relevance that cannot be contained by or confined to Constantinian categories.

Yoder specifically eschews the method of systematic theology. Yet the internal logic from topic to topic is so tight, the reader is almost left in the position of a whole-cloth appropriation or rejection of these ideas. For many of us this collection is a welcomed third volume of Yoderian (non)systematics. We await the next volume on missions. It is clear that Yoder's mind has changed precious little over the past 40 years. For others of us whose minds have changed, this volume spurs us to confront again just what it was we originally found so gripping in Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus.*

Resources

• • ▾

- **A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose** by Ruth Unrau (Commission on Overseas Mission, 1996, $12 U.S./ $17 Cdn.) is a history of the General Conference Mennonite Church's mission involvement in India from 1900-1995. Available from Faith & Life Bookstores, or call (316) 283-2210.
- **Keeping the Garden: A Faith Response to God's Creation** by Tim and Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn.) is a Generation Why Bible study for high-school youth on the environment.
- **Lead Us On** by Samuel J. Steiner (Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, 1995, $15 Cdn. plus postage) is a history of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., 1945-1995. Available from Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, 110 Doon Road, Kitchener, ON N2G 3C8; (519) 743-5209.
- **Bathsheba** by James R. Shott (Herald Press, 1996, $8.95 U.S./$12.80 Cdn.) is the eighth volume in the People of the Promise series on Bible characters.
- **A Treasured Friendship: Miriam's Journal #4** by Carrie Bender (Herald Press, 1996, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.), an Old Order Amish woman, is a fictional journal of an Amish woman.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 502
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

We are not alone

In his farewell discourse to his disciples, Jesus says, "I will not leave you orphaned" (John 14:18). Instead he promises to send a "paraclete" (v. 16). This "spirit of truth," Jesus says, "abides with you and … will be in you" (v. 17).

The term "paraclete" is translated in various ways: advocate, helper, counselor, comforter, friend. The Holy Spirit, Jesus says, will come to the disciples after Jesus leaves. Biblical scholar James D.G. Dunn calls the Spirit a "successor" to Jesus.

The new age in which we live is the age of the Spirit. Immanuel, "God with us," no longer takes the form of Jesus in the flesh. Instead God is with us and within us through the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit takes on many roles. Another scholar, Raymond E. Brown, in his two-volume commentary on the Gospel of John, lists the various understandings of "paraclete," then concludes that "no one translation of *parakletos* captures the complexity of [its] functions." In other words, the Holy Spirit should not be seen as limited to any one of its functions.

> **The Spirit who lives among us also lives within each of us and unites us in a mysterious love that surpasses all our suffering, all our tears.**

In the days following Pentecost (May 26 this year) we often focus on the Holy Spirit coming like fire, with joy and power, and we should. But in recent weeks I have needed the Holy Spirit as a comforter, a helper.

Last Sunday (May 12) our congregation prayed for three different acquaintances, including one of our members, who were having surgeries on the same day for cancer. I had just learned that authorities had found the body of a young Mennonite woman who had been abducted nine weeks before. Later I learned of another friend whose son had apparently drowned.

Adoption: At times I found myself crying or groaning with grief and supplication. I identified with a function of the Holy Spirit described in Romans: "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (8:15-16). "We … groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies" (8:23).

Just as Jesus both healed people and wept with others, so too the Spirit is with us to bring healing and to help us in our grief. As we ourselves suffer and as we suffer with those we love, we enter a deeper experience of God's presence.

Richard Rohr in his new book *Job and the Mystery of Suffering* (Crossroad) writes that while the Book of Job "has usually been regarded as a study of the mystery of evil—and it is," he looks at it "as the anatomy of a conversion; a journey to an ever-deepening encounter with God."

I have no answers to my friends who have cancer or who have lost loved ones. My attempts to speak and show my love and concern seem meager. Yet I become aware of a deep love previously obscured. I cannot fully experience their pain and grief, but I learn that the Spirit who lives among us also lives within each of us and unites us in a mysterious love that surpasses all our suffering, all our tears. I tell them and hope they can know that they—that we—are not alone. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

A proposal for worship in the new denomination / p. 10

Majestic, centuries-old worship / p. 11

What legacy will we leave? / p. 12

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 11
JUNE 11, 1996

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
LIBRARY
JUN 18 '96

- Which way Mennonite worship? (page 3)
- Reflect, rejoice and respond (page 8)

WORSHIP in the Mennonite church

Prologue

Worship is something most of us participate in each week. Yet how often do we talk about it? Have we asked ourselves why we worship the way we do? Are we open to looking at possible changes?

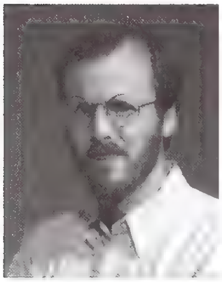
This issue takes a look at Mennonite worship, what it is, how it is changing and where it may be heading. Marlene Kropf, who is as familiar with worship practices among General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations as anyone, offers 10 observations about Mennonite worship (page 3). Then she points toward the future with three characteristics our worship should embody.

Renee Sauder offers a beautiful prayer (page 7) that you may want to use in your congregation's worship.

Leslie James looks at the church calendar (page 8) and asks us to reflect on the different rhythms of our secular society and the church.

Mennonite pastor Don Steelberg makes a proposal for the new denomination regarding worship practice (page 10).

Arthur Boers writes about his and others' visit to Syria, where they experienced the beauty of Orthodox worship (page 11).



Columnist J.B. Miller warns against selling out our children's future by how we handle Social Security benefits (page 12).

May God's Spirit enrich your worship. *gh*

Next issue: Should churches borrow money?

Cover: Photo by Vada Snider

Contents

FEATURES

3 Which way Mennonite worship?

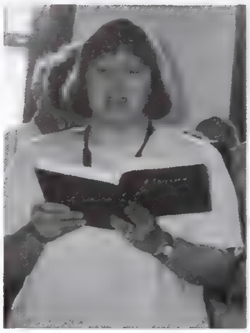
Ten observations and three words for the future

7 In the grip of God's love

A prayer of thanks

8 Reflect, rejoice and respond

Observing the church calendar offers a way of living and worshiping that breaks the cycle of being pulled along by a secular, consumer-driven calendar.



DEPARTMENTS

10 Speaking out
11 Commentary
12 Fiscal health
13 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

Which way Mennonite worship?

Ten observations and three words for the future

Marlene Kropf

A little over a thousand years ago the people of Russia were Christianized by missionaries who came from the East. Prince Vladimir of Kiev had sent emissaries to the known religious centers of his day in search of the true faith. When his emissaries came to the church called St. Sophia in Constantinople and saw the beauty of the Orthodox liturgy, heard the music and admired the icons, they marveled and said they knew not whether they were in heaven or on earth. They went home, inspired by the celestial beauty of the liturgy, and convinced their master that the Orthodox faith was indeed the true religion.

And because the Russian people tend to be artistic and are more at home expressing their religious faith in music, color and design than in books and learned discourses, they eagerly accepted the new religion and soon felt at home in the brightly colored churches that sprang up on the open plains of Russia.

In late April I returned from two weeks in Damascus, Syria, where I participated in Holy Week and Easter liturgies in the Syrian Orthodox Church (see pages 11 and 17). What those ancient envoys saw in the liturgy of Byzantium still lives today in the Syrian Church. I will long remember the glint of gold from hundreds of icons, great soaring domes, elaborate embroidery and the brilliant sweep of crimson, purple and gold in the robes of bishops and patriarchs, the sweet fragrance of incense in every church, the intense participation of hundreds of worshipers in standing-room-only services every day throughout Holy Week, the energetic chants of monks, priests and young people, and many majestic processions. Beauty and Orthodox worship go together.

Since I've returned from Syria, I've asked myself, What do people see when they come to Mennonite worship? What is our gift to the world of worship?

Changes in Mennonite worship

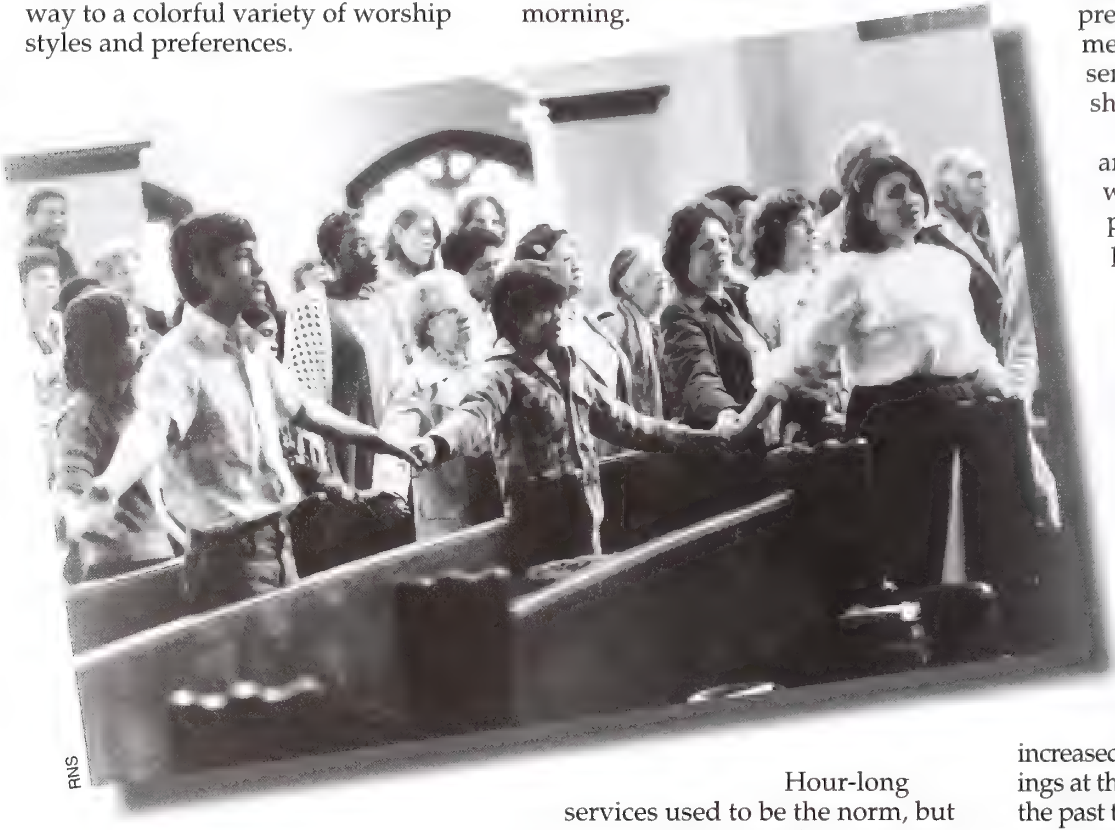
Mennonite pastor John Rempel says, "The liturgical upheaval in our churches at the end of the 20th century is as great as what happened during

WORSHIP
in the Mennonite church

> ***People are looking for an encounter with the divine—not talk about God but experience of God.***

the Protestant Reformation." If we are dismayed or perplexed by what is happening in worship, we should be patient. Incredible shifts and changes are altering the landscape of worship.

Fifty or 100 years ago, Mennonite worship looked much the same across North America. Today deregulation has come to Mennonite worship. Homogeneous patterns have given way to a colorful variety of worship styles and preferences.



RNS

Here are 10 observations about the changes that have occurred during the past 25 or 30 years.

1. Worship matters to us.

Congregational life is like a braided strand of rope, a weaving together of three essential elements: one strand is our life with God experienced in worship, another is our life as the body of Christ expressed in relationships with each other, and a third is our outer life of witness and ministry in the world. Because other strands of connection within the faith community have weakened, worship increasingly bears the stress of a fraying rope.

Worship also matters because of the hunger for experience of God in our secular world. People are looking for an encounter with the divine—not talk about God but experience of God.

Also we are spending more time in worship on Sunday morning. Hour-long services used to be the norm, but we now typically spend 75 minutes in worship, with many congregations moving to 90-minute services.

2. In our schools pastors are receiving more training in worship than in past decades.

Although training in worship is still scanty, it has increased. However, many who graduated before 1985 have had little or no training in worship.

3. More active participation in worship has become the norm.

Today preaching is seen less as the focal event of worship. Whereas singing used to be the main way for people in the pew to participate, lay participation has expanded to include worship leading, Scripture reading, praying, dramatic presentations, visual art, children's time and sharing of joys and concerns. Women have virtually taken over worship planning and leading in the church. In every worship conference or event, women are present in greater numbers than men. They are often overrepresented on congregational worship committees.

Children who were once seen and not heard in Mennonite worship now have a larger place and are expected to participate in a variety of ways.

4. Our worship shows a greater openness to symbol and to intuitive modes of knowledge.

Partly because of women's leadership and partly because of a cultural shift, we see increasing openness to the arts—for example, visual elements in worship, banners and the use of cloth in worship spaces.

Healing and anointing rituals as well as celebrations to mark the stages of the life cycle reflect an increased interest in ritual. Our gatherings at the Lord's Table are increasing; in the past three decades we have moved from observing Communion two to four times a year to four to eight times a year, with some congregations moving to monthly Communion services. This shift in practice has raised questions regarding the meaning of the Lord's Supper as well as who is welcome at the table. Silence is also a meaningful element of worship.

5. Wider use of the lectionary and the calendar of the Christian year is occurring in Mennonite worship.

The Common Lectionary was introduced in 1983 and revised in 1992. It is now used (at least intermittently) in 30

Gordon Houser

Variety in music: *A jazz trio from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.*

The prophetic call to justice, simplicity and compassion often seems muffled in contemporary Mennonite worship.

to 40 percent of Mennonite congregations. This shows a desire to restore the Bible to a more authoritative role in worship. It also reflects a desire for a more substantial, balanced diet of Scripture in worship.

Interest in the Christian year has come about for several reasons: a desire for more Christocentric worship, an increased appreciation for the history and practices of the early church and a new awareness of the importance of the life-giving rhythms of fasting and feasting.

6. The church faces increasing confusion about the relationship of worship and evangelism.

Because of the influence of megachurches such as Willow Creek Church in Chicago, we ask, Is the purpose of worship seeker-focused or God-focused? I have visited Willow Creek and am awed by what God is doing in the seeker events. Thousands gather there every weekend and are introduced to the basics of the Christian faith. But these events are not Christian worship, a fact reiterated by the leaders of Willow Creek.

If we once equated worship and preaching, we are now tempted to equate worship and entertainment. Today we more often ask questions about the appeal of worship than about faithfulness.

7. Mennonite worship today shows increased variety in music.

When *Hymnal: A Worship Book* was published in 1992, it was the most culturally diverse denominational hymnbook available. Today many churches sing from a growing collection of music beyond our hymnal. We enjoy singing songs from other cultures and appreciate a wide variety of contemporary musical idioms.

We are probably not as attentive to the theology of texts as we might be, but we weren't all that discriminating 40 years ago either. We use a greater variety of musical instruments in worship as well.

The plurality of music preferences has created considerable tension in some congregations. Worship and music issues are affecting pastoral tenure and have precipitated splits in some congregations.

8. Even though change is a constant dynamic in our lives, we are probably no better at managing change now than we were in the days when we changed from German language worship services to English.

After a major change has been accomplished, it is always so clear what should have been the proper course of action. In the midst of change we don't have such clarity.

9. The breakdown of community in church and the culture has created confusion about public space and private or personal space.

Because many of us lack intimacy in private life, we put unrealistic pressure on worship to accomplish or produce intimacy (one writer calls such worship "praise and schmooz"). Many North Americans have abandoned the public cultural arena to consumerism, entertainment and "show-biz" politics.

The small group phenomenon and the reduction of the large family clan to the nuclear family (or less) encourage us to see ourselves as individuals rather than institutions or traditions as centers of meaning, values, identity.

Such attitudes discourage interest in history, justice and our world. These attitudes create worshipers who expect everything that happens in worship to be personally pleasing. We forget how to speak or move across ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or age gaps.

In the worst cases of individualism, congregations suffer from "worship wars."

10. Mennonite worship is less transformative, less subversive than in the past.

In worship we are called to break the enchantment of the world. Through singing, praying and hearing the Word, we join with God's Spirit to renew the face of the earth.

Some of our practices, however, show capitulation to the values and customs of the world. For example, current trends in church architecture and church furnishings sometimes speak more loudly of interior decorating fads than wisdom about worship and public spaces.

Often our prayers in worship are unduly domestic. We should pray for each other, but we should also pray for God's reign to come on earth as in heaven. The prophetic call to justice, simplicity and compassion often seems muffled in Mennonite worship. We used to believe that if the church's worship is faithful, it would be subversive of culture, but I'm not sure we still claim such convictions.

Three words for the future

I offer three words to guide us as we care for worship and seek renewal in a changing time.

1. Mystery

Worship must invite people to enter the presence of a holy and loving God. People are hungry for an encounter with the divine; we cannot live without a relationship with our Maker, Lover and Keeper.

Eugene Peterson describes our dilemma in colorful language: "Overnight spirituality has become a passion for millions of North Americans. It should be no surprise that a people so badly trained in intimacy and transcendence might not do too well in their quest. Most anything at hand that gives a feeling of closeness—whether genitals or cocaine—will do for intimacy. And most anything exotic that induces a sense of mystery—from mantras to river rafting—will do for transcendence."

The task of worship leaders is a priestly one: to bring people into the presence of the true and living God. Mennonites must keep a clear focus on the Word of God.

- Let there be silence so the Word can be known and heard.
- When we do speak, let the Word be proclaimed with passion—with blood, breath, muscle, bone and humor.
- Let the Word be enacted. In rituals, drama, processions, simple movements and gestures and at the Lord's Table (often), let the creative Word come to life in our midst.
- Let the Word be seen. A frontier for Mennonites is the appropriate and imaginative use of visual elements in worship. We need to deepen our discovery of the power of images—the simple capacity of a bare branch, a stone and a sweep of purple cloth to serve as a path to the world of the Spirit.
- Let the Word be sung. What the proclaimed Word makes clear, music makes alive. We offer our heart's love when we sing. What we cannot find words to express, we speak with conviction when we sing.

If we open ourselves to an encounter with the mystery of God, we will discover a real and practical problem: Such a meeting takes time. Worship that moves people's hearts as well as their minds requires more than a tightly structured hour. A pastor wrote to me, "How does one sing several hymns (one of the most meaningful, inspiring parts of worship), hear from our choir, share with our children, read from the Word, have a time of proclamation (sermon), share joys and concerns (a sacred time in our congregation), give the offering, make announcements and pray meaningful prayers (including confession, silence, and intercession) all in one hour? And how does one educate an overly-busy, overly-stretched community that meaningful worship takes time?"

Our commitments to worship may need to be re-examined if we desire to meet the Lord of the universe in our assemblies of worship.

2. Hospitality

Worship leaders are also called to create a welcoming space—a circle of grace and love that makes transformation possible. This means encouraging a hospitable environment where all may enter into the acts of worship with freedom.

Gordon Houser

Worshipers should not need to fear being violated by the personality of worship leaders or being unduly imposed upon by personal tastes or biases. Most Mennonite congregations desire a minimalist but warm leadership style. Leaders who trust historic worship forms and also trust the people will know how to get out of the way and let the Spirit move.

A hospitable space also gives freedom for everyone to be fully present. Careful choices of songs and prayers, for example, will assure that both lament and joyful praise can be expressed. Honest prayers of confession and simple scriptural words of assurance make it possible for worshipers to come before God in faith and hope.

A frontier for Mennonites is the appropriate and imaginative use of visual elements in worship.

The sharing time, an innovation in Mennonite worship of the past 25 years, has given our worship a more human face. But in some settings congregations are wondering if this is being distorted. Prayers of petition and intercession have been important. What happens too frequently, though, is that lengthy recitals of personal concerns consume time better spent in prayer. We need creative ways to involve people in prayer so that our intercessions become more truly an encounter with God.

Hospitality includes practicing good manners. In worship conflicts congregations must find ways to welcome diversity.

A simple way to affirm a variety of musical preferences is to invite a different group of people to prepare music for gathering—perhaps 10 minutes—each Sunday. Sunday school classes could lead their favorite music, as could the youth group or children's classes.

Another dimension of hospitality is individual preparation for worship. One pastor noted that "dry" people on Sunday morning can spoil the entire worship experience for the rest of the congregation: "To be dry means to have put little time in prayer during the week, sporadic effort at Bible study, half-hearted attempts at spiritual discipline, rare observance or acknowledgment of the sacred in their daily life. Dry people consume a great deal of energy in worship. They expect worship to provide the whole of their engagement with God."

A hospitable worship climate makes it possible for leaders to receive helpful evaluation and improve their ministry skills. Not all are called to become worship leaders any more than all are called to become soloists in the choir. Congregations must regularly provide training for aspiring and current leaders. They should tap young people on the shoulder and appoint mentors for those with potential to lead worship.

3. A living sign

Worship exists as a sign of the reign of God. People want to see that worship makes a difference. When seekers observe passionate worship that trans-

True worship is a dangerous thing. It takes us out, propels us into God's suffering world and empowers us to do the work of love in the world.

forms and empowers God's people, they are attracted to the God we love and serve.

Worship is a political act. Whenever the people of God worship, we declare our allegiance to God's reign and realize anew that every other allegiance—to nation, family or self—is secondary. Such commitment and loyalty will change the way we live in the world.

One spring during Lent I visited Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky, the place where Thomas Merton lived as a hermit. I hiked in the hills and forest and came one day to a place called the Garden of Gethsemane. In the garden was a statue of Jesus in sorrow. A small memorial plaque nearby read:

Jonathan Myrick Daniels
1939-1965
Died in Selma, Alabama.

I was curious about this young man whose death placed him with Jesus in the garden. The next winter I came across the missing story. Jonathan Daniels was an Episcopal seminarian in Cambridge, Mass., during the Civil Rights movement. One afternoon he went to a meeting of the student executive committee. While they sat around drinking coffee, a fellow student described his wife's plans to fly to Selma that night in answer to Martin Luther King's plea for Northern volunteers. The committee voted to take up a collection to cover her expenses. Daniels went back to his dormitory room to examine his conscience.

Later that evening Daniels went as usual to evening prayer. As he sang The Magnificat—Mary's Song (sung in evening prayer in that tradition): "God has showed strength with his arm, God has lifted up the lowly ..."—he found himself "strangely alert, suddenly straining toward the decisive, luminous, Spirit-filled moment." He knew that he had to go to Selma.

Less than seven months later, Jon Daniels was dead—the victim of an Alabama segregationist's shotgun. That is why I found his memorial plaque in the Garden of Gethsemane.

True worship is a dangerous thing. It takes us out, propels us into God's suffering world and empowers us to do the work of love in the world.

In our worship we have encountered the mystery of the true and living God. Through our songs and prayers we have been formed into a loving, hospitable community—the body of Christ. And we have been transformed by the Holy Spirit to become signs of God's gracious reign. May God continue to bless all of us who plan and lead worship in the church and grant us wisdom to face the future.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. This article is adapted from a talk she gave at a worship symposium May 2-4 at Bethel College (see our May 28 issue, page 13).

Questions for discussion

What do people see when they come to Mennonite worship? Take a moment to write down the words that come to mind to describe the gift of Mennonite worship. Then discuss your ideas with others.

Have these observations described the church you know? What observations about worship trends would you add or delete?

In the grip of God's love

Renee Sauder

Gracious God, you who have created us and who sustains us, we come with thanksgiving for these moments when we can ease the pace of our lives, listen for your voice and share in your presence.

As the prairie sunflower is reckless in beauty, so you have spared no effort in lavishing grace on our lives. We thank you for the nourishment we receive from your hand, for the guidance you provide in our growth, for the fruitfulness you expect from us, which motivates us to grow in all grace.

Deliver us from the pride that would give us the illusion of self-sufficiency. Deliver us from the selfishness that turns us away from those who need us. Deliver us from the business that prevents us from hearing your calling. We seek the richness of life lived in love.

Hold tenderly in your hands each of us, that we may know the strength and peace that flow from your presence. Raise within each of us an interior song of cherished joy and unfading hope, that through the channel of our lives the whole body of Christ may be blessed. May your Spirit give us new forms of more generous and faithful response.

Held in the grip of your love teach us so to live. Amen.

Renee Sauder is pastor at Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont.

Reflect, rejoice and respond

Observing the church calendar offers a way of living and worshiping that breaks the cycle of being pulled along by a secular, consumer-driven calendar.

Leslie James

Lent began differently this year for a small group of people in my church. We held our first Ash Wednesday service. It was small, intimate, not very long at all. But for each person present the meaning of the Lenten season was brought into sharp focus as we stopped to reflect, surrounded by supportive community, on our own sinfulness, the evil and injustice in the world around us, and on the hope of our salvation, Jesus Christ. For each of us, Lent is not just the Sundays leading to Easter but a personal journey with Jesus toward the cross.

Our church is not alone. There are signs that the church year is being observed again in Mennonite churches. The practice of following the church year was common among Mennonites until the first quarter of this century. The translation of hymnals into English did not carry over the long-followed liturgical calendars. Increased mobility also changed the structure of community and worship, which were once so tightly intertwined.

More recently, it seems, our lives have been increasingly punctuated by secular holidays and the changes of seasonal ornamentation in the shopping mall or in discount stores. That our churches are beginning to re-explore the liturgical year speaks of a sense of dissatisfaction about where that has taken us.

The church (or liturgical) year is not foreign to us. After all, we celebrate Christmas and Easter and, in many of our churches we have acknowledged Advent and Lent. What we have failed to do too often is tie all the pieces together. In failing that, we have missed much of the power and importance of living and worshiping within the rhythm of the liturgical cycles.

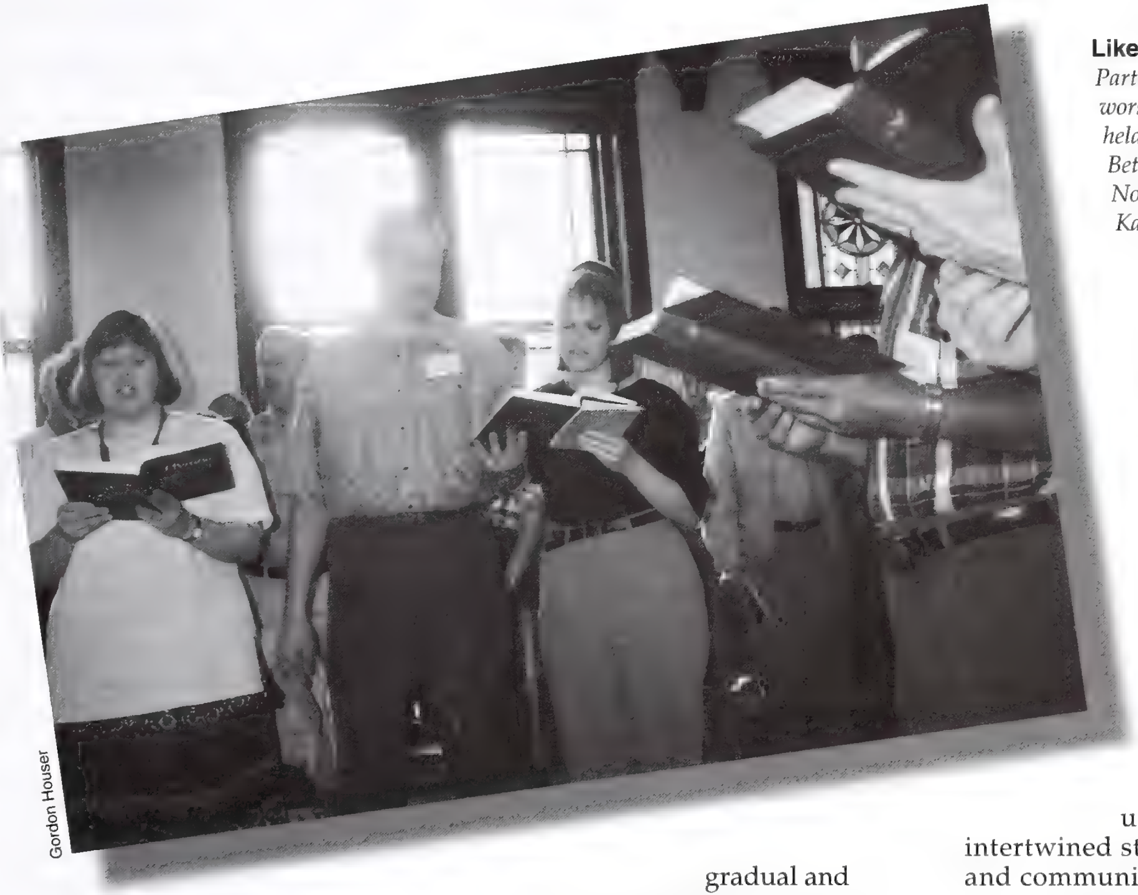
Robert E. Webber in his book *The Worship Phenomenon* speaks of two cycles of the church year: the "Cycle of Light," which encompasses Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, and the "Cycle of Life," which includes Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost. The time between these two cycles is known as "Ordinary Time." Taken together, the whole year rises and falls in a natural rhythm of reflecting (Advent and Lent/Holy Week), rejoicing (Christmas/Epiphany and Easter/Pentecost) and responding (Ordinary Time).

WORSHIP in the Mennonite church

This is a different way to live and worship. Seasons are not signaled by the arrival of holiday-specific products to buy and artificially heightened promises of holiday euphoria but by slowing to reflect on the story and meaning of the season. Relationships at home and in church are deepened as, together, people retell and re-experience the essential events around which our faith is formed. Instead of "day-after" letdown there is a season of time to celebrate and fellowship. Periods of reflection and celebration open into spaces where responses of growth and service flow naturally.

A community's experience of worship is enhanced as the worship space and music change to underscore the seasons. The brightness and glory of a sanctuary filled with flowers and alleluias on Easter are far more deeply felt when contrasted with the starkness and quiet of Lent. The joy and wonder of the resurrection can hardly be comprehended without the utter despair and hopelessness of Good Friday.

Seasons are not signaled by the arrival of holiday-specific products to buy and artificially heightened promises of holiday euphoria but by slowing to reflect on the story and meaning of the season.


Gordon Houser

Like breathing: *Participants at the worship symposium held May 2-4 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., sing hymns.*

Anticipation: Worship planning and experience become less choppy. Rooted in event, the whole of the story of faith is recounted and celebrated annually. Services within a season build on each other to help the worshiper explore and experience more deeply. There is a sense of gradual and sustained anticipation, a sense of shared journey. Yet no year is the same as the year before because as the community shares in this retelling, the telling is changed and deepened by the life experiences within the congregation.

Observance of the church year is not a magical formula, but it does offer fragmented and weary people a way of living and worshiping that breaks the cycle of being pulled along by a secular, consumer-driven calendar. Like breathing, the cycles of the church year rise and fall in a rhythm that calls us again into a tightly intertwined structure of worship and community. It gives parents and church families different ways to teach and share with children about life and faith and heritage. It provides a framework for retelling the stories of our faith and experiencing more deeply our relationship with Jesus Christ.

This year we experienced our first Ash Wednesday as a community of faith. I am sure it will not be our last. Next year there will probably be more people, but the service will be no less intimate or profound. Together, as a family, we will look squarely into the realities of Jesus' journey to the cross and of our own lives. Together we will find deeper understanding and strength for the sojourn of faith within the cycles of the church year.

Leslie James is a member of Hope Mennonite Church and lives in Wichita, Kan.

Different holiday rhythms

Secular calendar	Church year
• Driven by consumerism	• Driven by relationship
• Isolated, disjointed	• Natural ebb and flow
• Pressured, unrealistic expectation	• Unhurried growth of anticipation
• Society dictates responses	• Space for thanksgiving and restoration
• Letdown abrupt and often harsh	• Seasons allow time for observation

A proposal for worship in the new denomination

Are we ready to confront the underlying issues of worship that need exploration for the 21st century?

Don Steelberg

In all the writing and consultation of boards and commissions on the coming new denomination I have yet to see serious thought given to worship. Reflection and planning are devoted to structures. As mainline churches might put it, strong we have worked in the area of faith (e.g., *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*), and work goes forward on order (the Integration Committee), but worship is left to the status quo.

Perhaps that is to be expected in a free-church system that reflects its culture. We may suggest models according to our best adaptations of management theory. Give and take will eventually get us to new forms. We are less likely to try to mandate the work (liturgy) of worship.

In our borrowing we are more comfortable with secular nomenclature ("president") than biblical ("bishop") though the former today has as much of the power as the latter, but without the spiritual overlay of authority. So also in our worship. In the past century we have been content to borrow from neighbor Protestants according to our taste (Presbyterian, Methodist, Nazarene) or the culture (photocopied bulletins, projected music on the wall).

Are we ready to confront the underlying issues of worship that need exploration for the 21st century?

A symposium on worship May 2-4 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., is an example. While the main speaker and a Mennonite pastor asserted a strong belief that God is the center and purpose of worship, the format and worship experiences were so designed that the symposium did not confront how to achieve this. Indeed, the central exploration might have been confused with an exploration of our feelings toward God.

The symposium demonstrated readers' theater and appreciation for musical style but exemplified no authoritative preaching in the worship settings. It explored frequency of Communion, length of the service hour, movement and art and silence, though not too interculturally. It did not explore the core issue of what makes worship different from anything else we do.

However, Paul Westermeyer, the keynote speaker, noted in an offhand comment that the church experiencing the most growth today, without any of our elaborate evangelism schemes, is the Roman Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church does not have a history of participatory government. Nor do the fastest-growing Protestant churches, yet we are told that this is what people want.

Superb music: The Catholic Church does not have a history of singing nor the emphasis on superb music that we experienced at the symposium, which we are also told that people want.

The Roman Catholic Church, forthrightly and without embarrassment, provides what no secular source can provide: the forgiveness of sins. It does so through the observance of Holy Communion and its understanding that the observance is obligatory.

What should we mandate about worship in the Mennonite Church North America? That the forgiveness of sin be its core. God is the center, and we need to be in right relationship with God and therefore with others and the creation.

While I am not convinced that this is only to be experienced through weekly observance, Holy Communion is a powerful setting for the salvation available to us and an example of the way we are to live.

Would it not be a galvanizing proposal that weekly observance become the tradition of the new denomination? Discussing the meaning of Communion and worship would move us beyond the present concentration on structures.

Some people fear and others rejoice that weekly observance of Communion would extend the worship hour, but this does not need to be the case. I have attended Masses where 500 people and more have joined in the prayers, heard the preaching and communed in 55 minutes. I have been in lengthier Communion services where the focus has turned into therapy and massage rather than the hearing of the Word and act of forgiveness.

There are those who are blessed by the mystery of Communion. Some see it as a daily requirement. That is not my situation. I believe our worship, which Luther would have called a "dry Mass," can also mediate forgiveness, and as our Lord's Day worship is tribute to the resurrection, so is it a communing. We need to name it as that and drop the accretions that direct us away from it.

I am not convinced that weekly observance is absolutely the New Testament practice in the way it is done today. Every meal was a breaking of bread; Paul's worship service does not include Communion, the agape appears to have been at another time. Nor am I moved by the liturgical movement's adoption of third- and fourth-century forms as the way it should be. That means that Anabaptist forms can be followed or adapted. What is helpful in the ancient liturgies is the economy with which essential meanings are lifted up.

However, in many ways we have succumbed to a doctrine of once forgiven always forgiven, and in light of that we do not see the need for lifting up God's holy action in our lives and the restoration of right relationships Sunday by Sunday. We have lost the understanding of obligation.

For these reasons I propose that weekly observance of Holy Communion become the standard of the new denomination. The meditation and discussion of all this will advance our understanding of what the church should be, and our understanding of worship will increase.

Don Steelberg pastors Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., and co-chairs the Integration Committee.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Commentary

Majestic, centuries-old worship

Mennonites have much to learn from Syrian Christians.

Arthur Boers

Before I went to Syria with the Mennonite Central Committee worship tour in April, I wondered what I would find there.

Poverty?

Oppression?

Persecution?

Timid Christians?

What I found was a vibrant and living church characterized by majestic, centuries-old worship, lively Bible study, active youth groups, exciting children's programs and social outreach programs.

By the end of the tour some of us even wondered whether Syrian Christians take their faith more seriously than the North American Christians.

We saw thousands in church services. Stores played Christian music on loudspeakers on the street. People wear crosses for all to see. Taxi drivers have Christian pictures in their cabs.

On special holidays, church bands march and play music loudly through the streets of Damascus. On one night every year, churches open their doors and people are invited to walk around and visit as many churches as possible. At each church, visitors are given stickers to wear on clothes.

We saw streets packed with crowds who walked around openly displaying their stickers.

It caused us to ask what it means to proclaim boldly one's faith in a culture where Christians are a distinct minority.

Within 24 hours of our arrival, we started pondering what our Syrian hosts might observe about North American Mennonite church life.

We discussed what we might apply in Mennonite worship and deliberated about how to make worship more meaningful for youth and children in particular.

Many in our group expressed a desire for more frequent celebration of Communion.

Marlene Kropf, instructor in spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., helped lead the tour.

She noted that Mennonite worship is often strong on the "horizontal" (sharing and fellowship) but often misses the "vertical" (recognizing God's transcendence).

She and many others in the group said they were impressed by the reverent, worshipful and awesome aspects of Orthodox worship.

The Orthodox see their worship as imitating and participating in the heavenly worship of Revelation chapters four and five.

We pondered how such emphases might be introduced in Mennonite contexts. Ira Kurtz, pastor at Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., said he gained new ideas about how to emphasize the transcendent in worship.

Marion Bontrager, who is involved with the pastoral training program at Hesston (Kan.) College, resolved to work harder at teaching pastors how to pray.

Dietrich Bartel, associate professor of music at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, said he hoped to adapt some of the Orthodox music he heard in Syria; by the end of the trip he had already set the Lord's Prayer to two different tunes.

Marlene Kropf and June Alliman Yoder, associate professor of communication and preaching at AMBS, said they plan to take more seriously early Syrian theologians.

Some group members plan to use versions of Orthodox prayers in their own devotions.

Others said they plan to develop worship services incorporating some of the elements they observed and take Holy Week more seriously.

One pastor on the tour was so impressed by a foot-washing ceremony where the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch ministered to children that she wondered whether this might be the way to reintroduce foot washing, our mostly forgotten rite, into Mennonite churches.

Some also hoped to deepen relations with Orthodox Christians locally.

Eleanor Kreider works with Christians in Great Britain interested in Anabaptism. She says that many people she knows "have a narrow sense of who Christians are. My ministry is to remind people that the church is bigger than … England."

Many in the group spoke of a desire for deeper solidarity with Syrian Christians. The group was often asked to remember Syrians in prayer.

Eleanor was moved by the history of persecution that Syrian Christians experienced in past centuries and drew connections with Mennonite history.

Syrian Christians impressed, inspired and challenged us. As is so often the case with overseas pilgrimages, we who thought we were visiting needy people came away realizing that others had much to give.

Arthur Boers is pastor of the Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Arthur Boers (MCC)

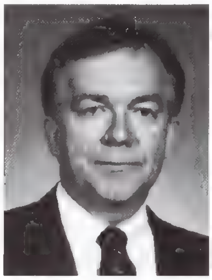
Inspired: *Syria worship tour participants.*

Mennonite worship often misses the "vertical" (recognizing God's transcendence).

What legacy will we leave?

Don't count on future benefits from Social Security.

J.B. Miller



J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

One of the most perplexing questions I face is how to plan for retirement. I was born after the Roosevelt administration introduced Social Security in the United States, and ever since my first job I have had money withheld from my salary, ostensibly to provide Social Security benefits for me when I hit those golden years. Now I keep hearing that there may not be any Social Security for me, or if there is it will not be sufficient to meet my expectations or my needs. But I've paid in all these years. Don't I deserve to get something back?

After all, the government has been telling me that I deserve these benefits. Or do I?

In a recent article in *Atlantic Monthly,* Peter G. Peterson writes that unless there is a massive reform of our entitlements and our entitlement mentality, we are headed for disaster. We are facing an incredible demographic shift over the next 25 years, and this shift will have a profound impact on all of us who will live to experience it. By 2025, one in five people will be over age 65. By 2040, one in four will be over 65.

In 1960 there were 5.1 taxpaying workers to support each Social Security beneficiary. Today there are 3.3 workers, and by 2040 there will be no more that two. These workers will have to pay the Social Security benefits to those of us who are hoping to collect it.

Contrary to what you may think, the money you have paid into Social Security is not set aside, waiting for you to retire. The Social Security program is basically a pay-as-you-go program. Money that is paid in today is going out in benefits to those receiving Social Security benefits now, with a minimal surplus being built to meet the aging population.

By 2013 the annual surplus of Social Security tax revenues over payments will turn negative. By 2030, when all the Baby Boomers have reached age 65, Social Security will be running an annual deficit of $766 billion. If Medicare is included with its current benefits, the cash deficit will be $1.7 trillion.

Raise taxes: The obvious solution to this shortfall is to raise taxes. The government has a history of doing this. But is that really viable when you consider that there will be fewer workers to pay for these benefits?

Raising taxes is not the solution. By 2040 the cost of Social Security as a share of a worker's payroll is expected to rise to 17 percent, and by some estimates to 22 percent. Add Medicare and the total withholding from a worker's payroll is projected anywhere from 35 percent to 55 percent. It seems to me that tax increases of this size will never work.

> ***Many Social Security recipients are taking money from their own children's paychecks to support their lifestyles.***

So how is this massive financial train wreck going to be avoided? Peterson and others have made suggestions. Here are some things to consider:

1. Quit thinking about Social Security as an entitlement; something I deserve because I paid into it all my life. The vast majority of Social Security recipients get much more from the system than they pay in. Given an average life expectancy, the average one-earner couple retiring today will get about $123,000 more out of Social Security than the average earner and his or her employers ever paid into it, plus interest. If you omit the employer's contribution, the windfall rises to $173,000. When Medicare is thrown in it goes to $310,000. Any way you cut it, Social Security and Medicare recipients are participating in a welfare program.

2. Subject all federal benefits to a needs test. Cut back entitlements to people who don't need them. Being old is not synonymous with being poor, even though some senior lobbyists want us to believe that. Elderly Americans have the highest level of per capita household wealth of any age group. One-third of Medicare benefits and nearly 40 percent of Social Security benefits go to households with incomes above the U.S. median.

3. Start saving more for retirement now. In a recent study published in *Fortune* magazine, it was noted that if a couple at age 40 decide to go out to dinner and a movie only twice a month instead of four times and put the savings into a tax-sheltered retirement plan, they will accumulate $170,000 for their retirement at age 65. Paying off credit card bills when they come due instead of incurring finance charges will save another $120,000.

4. Reduce our expectation of the government as a provider of subsidized health-care insurance. In 1930 the federal government spent about $1 on health care for the typical older person. By 1965 the figure had risen to about $100 per year, by 1975 to $1,000, and by 1995 about $7,000. These costs are not due primarily to waste, fraud or abuse. Rather they are due to new medical technologies and insurance systems that exempt most people from having to make choices about treatment. These include choices of how we balance a limited resource called health care among our citizens.

This is just beginning to scrape the tip of the iceberg of what needs to be done to reform and save the system. To put it bluntly, many Social Security recipients are taking money from their own children's paychecks to support their lifestyles, whether they need the resources or not. The question is this: Will we voters support massive change to a system that is headed for bankruptcy before it reaches crisis proportions? If not, we are bequeathing a catastrophe to our children and grandchildren.

News

• • • ▾

Women hold third theology conference

Winnipeg—For three days (May 9-11) more than 200 women and a handful of men gathered at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College here for the third Anabaptist Women Doing Theology conference, titled "Wind and Fire: Moving the Life Among Us."

With joy, sorrow, anger and hope, the group of predominantly Anabaptist women gathered to worship and discuss faith issues, exploring the emerging theological voices of women.

Participants also invited men to join the conversation of the weekend conference.

"We're saying that what we are doing is uniquely out of women's experience but that it is important and valuable conversation to have with the men in our lives," said planning committee member Bonnie Loewen.

Sponsored by CMBC, Concord College and Mennonite Central Committee, the conference included theology using various art forms alongside traditional, rational ways of speaking faith in discovering what it means to be an Anabaptist woman doing theology in today's world.

For the first time the conference included an exhibition of art by Anabaptist women as well as the availability of poetry and literature along with theological books for sale. It was also the first conference of its kind to include nonverbal responses to the papers that were presented.

"The conference moved through a variety of parts of myself," said planning committee member Irma Fast Dueck. "We moved from a cerebral reflection to experiencing the emotion as well as the movement of art. All parts were drawn together."

Papers by theologians and scholars formed the basis for the discussion at the conference on the general topic of an Anabaptist feminist hermeneutic. Presenters included Nadine Pence Frantz, Ruth Krall, Veronica Dyck and Eleanor Epp-Stobbe. They discussed the Anabaptist feminist hermeneutic in the contexts of (inter)textuality, anger, God image and community.

Frantz indicated that a reading of a particular text is shaped by our experience—a text will be read differently each time it is read or written. However, a danger arises when women feel they must master or reduce the text to one final meaning. Dialogue with others needs to continue in order not to become masters of the text in a feminist way, in contrast to what is often considered a patriarchal interpretation of Scripture.

Krall, a professor of religion and psychology at Goshen (Ind.) College, said all humans need to be transformed from selfishness and domination over others. She reasoned that justice-making and peace-making are at the heart of the biblical texts' messages about human relatedness in the Christ community and that feminist women must commit themselves to making a difference in the lives of people around them.

"We're saying that what we are doing is uniquely out of women's experience but that it is important and valuable conversation to have with the men in our lives."

Bonnie Loewen

In response to Krall's presentation many women spoke of anger at the church, at the way they were raised and at the injustices around them.

Epp-Stobbe encouraged the women to think of God in new ways within the community. She reasoned that women are not the only ones who feel the exclusivity of the church but that there needs to be a connectedness within the community. Individuals long for community at the same time they seek autonomy. Our worship holds great potential for building

Inside the news

In search of another side / p. 14

MDS rebuilds church destroyed by arsonists / p. 15

Young adults need community / p. 16

Church has unusual activities / p. 17

Mennos worship in Syria / p. 17

AMBS celebrates 50 years / p. 18

Service brings new perspectives / p. 19

How to apply to MVS / p. 20

Michael Miller, son of General Conference staffperson Marilyn Miller, died May 12 while kayaking on the Animas River north of Durango, Colo. He was 32. Memorials can be sent to the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, 1520 Euclid, Boulder, CO 80302.

• • •

A tornado ripped through Beatrice, Neb., May 8, causing $150,000 U.S. damage to First Mennonite Church there. The tornado uprooted and damaged the 60-year-old windbreak around the church, tore off part of the roof and caused interior water damage. None of the building's stained-glass windows was damaged. Two members of the church were inside the building at the time of the twister. Former pastor Donavin Diller, his wife and several others tried to find shelter in the church but couldn't get in. They rode out the storm against the north side of the church. The tornado caused more than $10 million damage in the Beatrice area. The worst injury suffered was a broken arm. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Emily Will of Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa., received a first-place award from the Pennsylvania Press Club for "Portraits of refugees from Bosnia" (see *The Mennonite*, Jan. 24, 1995).

• • •

British Columbia Women in Mission met April 28 at Olivet Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C. The theme for the gathering was "Are any among you suffering?" (James 5:13). Two hundred twenty women attended the meeting.

• • •

Inman (Kan.) Mennonite Church will celebrate its 75th anniversary on July 28. The congregation was a mission plant of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church in rural Inman. A service of praise will be held July 28, with two services, one at 9:30 a.m. and one at 1:30 p.m. A noon fellowship dinner will be served. Former members, pastors and interested people are invited.

• • •

JoAnne Lingle, member of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, was sentenced to two months in prison for criminal trespass at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Ga. The training school's alumni include soldiers who have committed numerous atrocities in Latin America and who killed Archbishop Oscar Romero. Lingle had joined a 74-year-old nun and several others at the protest. The judge at the trial is known for giving harsh sentences for civil disobedience. However, at this trial, the leader of the protest was allowed to make a statement, saying he would protest at the school again. He invited the judge to join him. The courtroom burst into applause; the judge did not call the court to order but let the applause continue. (*National Catholic Reporter* and a report from Ryan Ahlgrim)

community in today's society. A willingness to change our worship in a way that will include as many people in our community as possible needs to be evident.

Veronica Dyck, a doctoral candidate in the faculty of religious studies at McGill University, challenged the attenders to consider changing their thinking more than just changing their language about God.

Visual artists included Dale Boldt, Helene Dyck, Milly Giesbrecht, Melody Goetz, Norma Hoeppner, Lois Klassen, Grace Rempel and Jean Smallwood. Linda Schwartz composed a musical response, Talia Shore danced a response and Joan Yoder dramatized a nonverbal response. Participants heard the premiere of "Born Again," a musical presentation written by Sarah Klassen and Linda Schwartz and sung by Heidi Klassen.

Dueck noted the variety of Anabaptist churches represented by the group, including women from the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite and Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church conferences.

"We made bridges with that diversity of experience," she said. *Based on reports by Marj Heinrichs and Susan Brandt*

In search of another side

Winnipeg (CMBC)—Kathryn Marie Lesedi Derksen Stück drove a long way to get in touch with the creative and expressive side of herself. She was not disappointed as the "Wind and Fire: Anabaptist Women Doing Theology" conference drew to a close.

Stück journeyed alone from Fresno, Calif., to Winnipeg to attend the conference. After a three-day journey, she was rerouted by flood waters, considerably lengthening her trip, but she was not deterred and says the conference was definitely "worth the trip."

"I've learned things about myself," she says. "The whole (conference) felt so balanced. I'm not going to apologize (anymore) for my creativity."

Stück, who is working on her master's degree in conflict management and peacemaking at Fresno Pacific College, heard about the conference from a friend and felt compelled to attend.

"I needed to be here. I am a future Anabaptist woman."

Kathryn Stück

"I put my sweat and tears into this," she says, adding, "I needed to be here. I am a future Anabaptist woman."

Stück says she works with, lives with and has learned from men. "I haven't had a lot of women role models and I have had no Anabaptist women role models."

Although she attends an Anabaptist church in Fresno and has found "community in the city" through her church, Stück says she was beginning to realize "the women's voice is missing."

"I came to this conference to find out if I had another side—to explore the emotional, creative and expressive side of humanity."

Stück says she appreciated the nonverbal responses to the papers and found the worship services especially moving. The worship committee, including Flori Ens, Adelia Neufeld Wiens, Leona Dueck Penner and Marilyn Houser Hamm, incorporated music, drama, liturgy, silence and prayer into carefully planned worship sessions.

"I cried—and I don't cry," says Stück. "I noticed myself being comforted in this atmosphere. I was freer with my expressions and my body."

The paper by Ruth Krall on "Anger and an Anabaptist Feminist Hermeneutic" put Stück in touch with some feelings of anger that surprised her. "I've learned things about myself, about anger."

What she learned at the conference will change relationships in her life, says Stück, and will also change how she writes her thesis on war to include a feminist peace theology. "I am a woman and I can't write as if I'm not."

Stück says the trip was exhausting and she was overwhelmed by the many facets of the conference, but she had no regrets about attending. *Marj Heinrichs*

MDS rebuilds church destroyed by arsonists

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—An African-American church in Alabama burned by arsonists in January will be rebuilt this summer with the help of Mennonite Disaster Service, says Lowell Detweiler, MDS coordinator.

MDS has been asked by community leaders in Greene County, Ala., to rebuild Mount Zoar Baptist Church, one of three churches near the town of Boligee destroyed by arsonists this winter, says Detweiler. "Mount Zoar was selected because it had the least resources for rebuilding, including very little insurance."

Some funds for rebuilding the three churches have come to local organizations, but MDS is committed to raising the projected additional $50,000 needed for the project. The money will be used for building materials and logistical support for the volunteers working on the project.

Over 20 African-American churches were burned in the South in the last year and many people fear the arsons are racially motivated. No local white churches were burned. Particularly suspicious is that two of the Boligee-area churches were burned the day local newspapers reported the sentencing of two young white men for their part in a drunken rampage at three African-American churches in a neighboring county two years ago.

Greene County is about 85 percent African-American. The 1990 per capita income was $6,300, considerably less than other Alabama counties. Public schools have almost no white students —most attend a private academy.

When MDS constituents heard about the church burnings they asked that MDS assist in rebuilding one of them, says Detweiler. "There was a desire to help out, to respond to an injustice."

MDS leaders met a number of times with local church leaders to determine if MDS should get involved and what it should do. "At this point it looks like the project will be a major location for summer youth groups," says Carla Hunt, MDS personnel coordinator. "We anticipate that each week a youth group [and supervisors] will be assisting in the project."

Hunt says MDS is looking for people with building skills like masonry, bricklaying, plumbing, electrical and heating, to help out. If interested, contact MDS Akron at (717) 859-2210 until an on-site office and phone number is available.

People wishing to donate to the project can do so by sending a check made out to MDS and marked "Alabama church rebuilding," to Mennonite Disaster Service, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17500-0500.

MDS photo

Racially motivated? *Fire-scorched outer walls and rubble are all that remain of the Mount Zoar Baptist Church building in Greene County, Ala.*

At the same time that the bottom 10 percent of Canadians have experienced a declining share of the economic pie, the top 10 percent has seen its share increase dramatically. In 1960, executive salaries in Canada were 12 times the bottom salary in their companies; today that figure is 117 times. (MCC Canada)

• • •

Over 200 delegates to the 198th sessions of Eastern District Conference (EDC) met on the grounds of the Frederick (Pa.) Mennonite Community May 3-4 in order to celebrate the 100th anniversary of this retirement complex. Frederick Mennonite Community, which receives financial support from EDC, is the oldest Mennonite retirement community in the United States. Myron Augsburger, Harrisonburg, Va., gave two messages: "Spirituality of Discipleship" and "Growing in Intent and Action." Delegates passed a 1996-97 budget of $222,000 U.S., an $8,500 (3.8 percent) increase over the last fiscal year.

• • •

Susanna Reimer, a Mexican Mennonite immigrant to Canada, successfully delivered her third child but now requires open-heart surgery. Susanna and her husband, Willie, moved from Mexico to Gretna, Man., a year ago. Susanna was allowed to enter Canada on a one-year minister's permit, which doesn't include medical coverage. Winnipeg doctors are providing their services for free, but the Reimers need to pay the hospital bills. Costs are estimated to rise to $50,000 Cdn. A medical fund has been set up for the Reimers. Contributions (non-tax deductible) may be sent to Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

The Colombian Mennonite Church and the Christian Center for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action (JUSTAPAZ) are inviting all Mennonite and Anabaptist churches to unite in a world network for justice and peace. The network will support nonviolent groups fighting war and oppression around the world. (*Latin American Ecumenical News*)

• • •

Russia has published figures on the persecution of Christians and other religions since the Communist revolution of 1917. By 1985, 200,000 church leaders had been murdered by the Soviet Union; 300,000 Christians were imprisoned; and 40,000 churches and "half the mosques and more than half the synagogues" were destroyed. (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

The United States seems to have turned a corner in the battle against AIDS. This year about 10,000 more Americans will die of AIDS than will catch it, meaning that the number of Americans living with the AIDS virus is decreasing, according to a report by Robert Biggar of the National Cancer Institute. (*The Christian Leader*)

• • •

More than 100 new religions are being formed every year in Japan, reports Evangelical Press News Service. A religious group called Happy Science, founded nine years ago by a former office worker, is the largest of the new sects, with about 5 million members. The group embraces all humanity and the universe. Its deities include Buddha, Zeus, Jesus Christ and a space-traveling giant called El Kantare. (*Encounter*)

Young adults need community

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—"Community is a place to go to and a place to be from. In community we can grow and become more humane in terms of how we treat each other and how we treat ourselves," Ken Hawkley told 38 participants who attended a meeting of the Young Adult Network May 9-11 in Chicago.

The network is part of the Mennonite Church (MC), but a number of General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) staff, pastors and young adults also participated. For Beryl Jantzi, associate pastor at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, the event offered the opportunity to be in touch with the issues facing young adults at what he called "the grass roots." It was the fourth time Jantzi had attended this annual meeting; it often is the best event he attends over the course of the year, he says. (See related article, p. 17.)

Hawkley

Hawkley, who is the director of adult/young adult education for the GC Commission on Education, was the keynote speaker. He spoke of how increasing individuality has led our current culture to be like the Tower of Babel. "We cannot speak to each other because we do not know each other's language," he said. "But God showed us a way around this dilemma at Pentecost, where the disciples were given the gift to speak the languages of the world so God's word could be passed on.

"Young adults, steeped in culture, know that the church that really works is the one that goes out into the world. Young adults are positioned to lead the church community to a new level of involvment in the sense that they can teach the church how to present the gospel message in ways the world will understand."

Hawkley asked the participants to break into small groups to design the kind of church they would like to see in their communities. Desiree Kern, a 20-year-old from London, Ont., noted that, by and large, people were interested in creating an environment that was different from the one they experienced in their own congregations.

In Kern's small group, for example, they expressed the desire for a multicultural church, one that would strive to be a welcoming and comfortable place for a variety of ethnic groups. They also felt the church should focus on reconciliation, particularly in the area of racism.

An art student at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Kern has little sense of community at this juncture in her life. "Many of my friends are scattered to the four corners of the earth. There is a lot of transition at the university. It feels very temporary," she says.

> ***"Young adults ... can teach the church how to present the gospel message in ways the world will understand."***
>
> **Ken Hawkley**

She finds it difficult to fit in when she returns to visit her home congregation in Ontario because most activities are geared for youth or for newly married couples.

Cheryl Shreiner, a 23-year-old graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, has struggled with the mobile lifestyle of her generation, too. While she has a sense of community through her attendance at Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, where she also is a part-time youth worker, many of her college friends are also scattered.

She did pick up some ideas on how to bridge the gap between young adults and adults. "I learned the importance of approaching others with no preconceived notions, the importance of being open-minded," says Shreiner. "It means so much to me when an older person treats me like an adult. I also need to take the initiative; I shouldn't assume that older people are outdated in their ideas."

Kern would like to see more honesty in the church setting about hard issues such as racism, sex and drugs. "I feel like I ask questions, but I don't get answers. A couple of straight answers would be nice. Unlike the adults, I haven't learned to be political yet," she says. "I think we need to see more of the everyday reality brought into church. We need to recognize that people do have conflicts."

Many of Shreiner's friends probably wouldn't be connected to the church at all, except for the fact that they are serving with Mennonite Central Committee or voluntary service. Their views, she says, are too liberal for most Mennonite congregations.

Still, she thinks that she, as well as her friends, will always carry the idea of Mennonite community inside them wherever they happen to go. *Carla Reimer*

Church has unusual activities

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—Beryl Jantzi, associate pastor at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, thinks young adults should be integrated into the life of a congregation as much as possible.

That said, he also doesn't have any problems with planning unusual activities that will appeal to this age group at his church.

Some may get frustrated with the turnover of young adults. But, Jantzi says, the church should acknowledge that this age group is simply "at a transitory stage in their lives. We shouldn't bemoan it. It shouldn't stop us from putting young adults in positions of leadership."

> ***"Our task may be ... to bless people as they minister in the world."***
>
> **Beryl Jantzi**

On the other hand, he thinks it is a good idea for young adults to go on outings together, even if they occur during the traditional Sunday morning service. The church had a good turnout for a Sunday morning trip to the Holocaust Museum in Washington. "We had church in the van," he says.

Akron Mennonite Church has fewer activities mid-week for youth and young adults now compared with 10 years ago. "We try to cram more into a Sunday morning," Jantzi says. "I don't think this is a reflection of people's commitment to church.

"People have a lot of professional commitments and high stress. Our task may not be programs, but empowerment—to bless people as they minister in the world." *Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church*

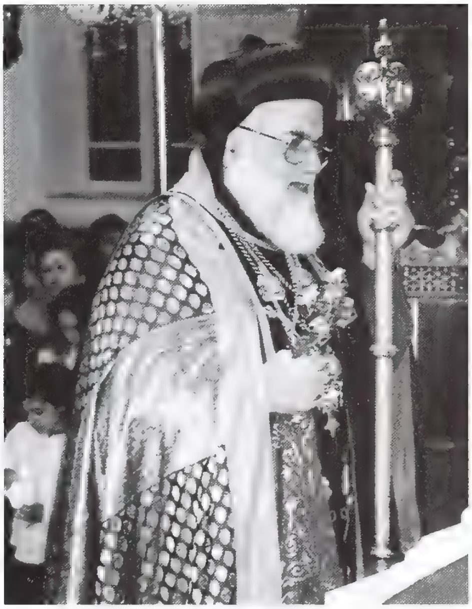
Mennonites worship in Syria

Damascus, Syria (MCC)—The city of Damascus is central to the history and life of Christianity. It was home to an early Christian community even before Paul's conversion. The Bible mentions it almost 60 times.

Orthodox Christians consider it one of the world's holiest cities. However, North American Christians are quite unfamiliar with Damascus. For a group of Mennonites from the United States and Canada, all that changed when they visited the city in April as part of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worship tour. The group, which consisted of 14 pastors, professors and church leaders who are interested in Mennonite worship, visited Syria during the high holy days of Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. The visit was planned and hosted by Roy Hange and Maren Tyedmers Hange, who co-direct MCC activity in Syria, with the assistance of Marlene Kropf, adjunct instructor in spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind.

Most of the group's time was spent in Damascus, but we also spent several days in Aleppo, Syria's second largest city, and visited various Christian historical sites.

Although the trip focused on Orthodox Christians (Syrian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox), the group also had



Arthur P. Boers

Warmly welcomed: *His Holiness Mar Ignatious Zakka I Iwas, Syrian Orthodox Church, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East*

The Fresno (Calif.) Victim Offender Reconciliation Program has designed a training seminar for groups wanting to start a VORP in their communities. An August training session will be held in the Lancaster, Pa., area, and an October session in Fresno. For more information contact the web site at: http://www.fresno.edu/pacs.

• • •

The Church of the Brethren has declared its objection to U.S. President Clinton's policy regarding landmines. The president has not banned all landmine use, only "dumb" landmines that do not self-deactivate. The policy also allows the use of landmines in Korea and other specific geographical locations. Clinton is yielding to Pentagon requests in the face of opposition from U.S. State Department officials and the advice of 15 high-ranking military officers, including General Norman Schwartzkopf.

• • •

The Steinreich Bible School in northern Mexico had an enrollment of 31 students this year. Henry and Helen Dueck, Herbert, Sask.; Abe and Hanna Rempel, Winnipeg, and Ella and Jake Neufeld, Winkler, Man., were involved with the school, which operated from early January through March 31. All three couples served at the school under the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. In addition to the regular daytime classes, the Duecks taught Mennonite history and Spanish during the evening. Twenty-six Old Colony members from Steinreich attended the Spanish language class.

"Journey to Jerusalem" is a two-week travel/study seminar in Israel and Palestine Nov. 13-29 for students, alumni and friends of Bluffton (Ohio) College. Loren Johns, assistant professor of religion, and Randy Keeler, campus pastor, will lead the tour. Registration and $200 U.S. deposit are due Aug. 1. For information contact Randy Keeler at (419) 358-3219.

• • •

A new international mutual fund, investment choice for Mennonite Retirement Trust, and a mental health summit meeting to address mental health-care coverage were discussed at the Mennonite Mutual Aid board of directors meeting May 2-3. Merger of the Mennonite Church with the General Conference Mennonite Church, providing services in Canada and alternative medicine were other topics of discussion.

• • •

Charities received nearly $12 million U.S. donated through Mennonite Foundation in 1995. In addition, $24 million was given to the foundation for future distribution to charities. A total of $11,784,415 was distributed to more than 1,000 churches and other charities in 1995. Twenty-five percent of the funds went to educational institutions, 23 percent to local congregations, 13 percent to missions and relief, 5 percent to hospitals and retirement homes, 5 percent to conferences and districts, and 29 percent to other charitable organizations. Over 70 percent of the money was contributed to Mennonite-related organizations. Approximately 5,000 households now give to charity through Mennonite Foundation programs.

contacts with Muslims, including an audience with the Grand Mufti of Syria, Sheikh Ahmad Kuftaro. Participants also attended a Friday service at his mosque, the largest in Damascus. Dan Nighswander, pastor at Ontario's Waterloo North Mennonite Church, was given an opportunity to address the congregation of 12,000.

We also visited convents, sites associated with Paul's conversion, monasteries, churches, an iconographer and a seminary. Our Mennonite hearts were warmed by learning about active youth groups, revived interest in Bible study and children's Sunday school programs.

Before we arrived, Syrians asked Hange and Tyedmers Hange whether our group was coming as tourists or to pray. The answer was the latter; we eagerly worshiped with Syrians, even though the ancient liturgies were conducted in Greek, Arabic and even Syriac. All of us were moved by the passion and richness of liturgies that have been handed down for over a millennium. Among the highlights: praying with seminarians, participating in Greek Orthodox prayers, observing a Syrian Orthodox Maundy Thursday foot-washing service, enjoying a children's mass, witnessing an anointing service and appreciating rich Holy Week and Easter celebrations. In a Greek Orthodox monastery we were invited to participate in the liturgy by reading Scriptures and texts in English. We also met with church leaders: two Patriarchs, several bishops and priests, monks and deacons.

Given the strains between the United States and Syria and the fact that during the visit Israel was bombing southern Lebanon, we wondered what kind of reception we might receive. On all occasions we were warmly welcomed. Patriarchs and bishops introduced us to their congregations, noting that the Mennonites had come to learn. For Orthodox Christians this was an affirming comment; they told us they were grateful for the visit, since they often feel alone in their attempts to incarnate Christ's presence and witness in the Middle East. We came away challenged by the faith and faithfulness of Syria's 1.2 million Christians and hopeful that the worship they witnessed could inform and inspire the worship life of North American Mennonites. *Arthur Boers, pastor of Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church*

AMBS celebrates 50 years

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—A 50-hour prayer vigil framed the April 26-28 celebration of the 50-year history of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, which began with Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1945 and Goshen College Biblical Seminary in 1946. With the theme "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven," the worship services called worshipers to pray for God's kingdom around the world. Fifty candles, representing the 50 hours of prayer and 50 years of AMBS history, reminded the community of God's guidance in the past and into the future.

Peter Wiebe, pastor at Trinity Mennonite Church, Phoenix, was the keynote speaker at the Saturday evening banquet for alumni, former instructors and the current seminary community. "It is important to know where we've come from and who's behind us, but it is even more important to see clearly what is ahead of us," Wiebe said.

One key to preparing for the future, Wiebe said, is to "keep asking the church what kind of leadership will serve its needs best and then move in that direction." He called the seminary and the church to a closer relationship, saying, "Friendships between the seminary and church must be cultivated with fervor; here is where the strength of our denomination lies for the future."

The weekend was the first event of a year-long emphasis at AMBS on its 50-year history. The theme of the entire 50th-anniversary commemoration at AMBS is "Foundations for the Future." Erland Waltner, long-time leader of the seminary, reflected at the end of the prayer vigil, "God's word to us is a benediction of engagement—engagement in and with and for the world that God so loved. ... the call to witness to Jesus Christ our risen Lord goes on and on and on and on." *Mary E. Klassen*

Service brings new options, perspectives

Editor's note: *This is the first in a series of articles on three young adults who are considering the possibility of voluntary service in the summer or fall of this year. Mike Schmidt, who spent most of his childhood in Goessel, Kan., is a second-year student who is planning to take a break from his studies for one year. Phil Schmidt and Marla Gaeddert hope to enter voluntary service a few months after they get married this summer. Phil grew up in Newton, Kan., while Marla is originally from Denver. They all indicated that their families and home congregations played a crucial role in encouraging their interest in service.*

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—On the "spur of the moment" one evening last October, Mike Schmidt decided to look at a listing of Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignments while he was waiting for a friend in the lounge at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.

A second-year student majoring in Spanish at the University of Waterloo, he was surprised to discover many assignments needed volunteers with bilingual skills.

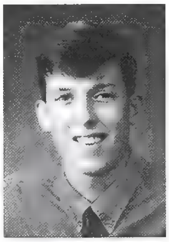
Having spent the last three summers volunteering in Guatemala, Mike figured there was a good chance he might end up in Latin America or some other location once he completed his bachelor's degree. But after reading about the volunteer opportunities in North America, he realized "there is a lot that can be done here."

When Marla Gaeddert and Phil Schmidt discussed what they wanted to do following their marriage this summer, they reached the same conclusion. Marla graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1994. Phil graduated from Bethel in May with a bachelor's degree in biology. She works as a counselor at United Methodist Youthville in Newton.

As a result, the three young adults applied to MVS. Once the applicants hear the details of their assignments, they will decide whether they still want to become volunteers. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Phil and Marla say they were initially interested in an overseas assignment. Phil recalled hearing his parents tell about the experiences they had during their Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Bolivia. Marla wanted to serve somewhere in Africa. However, they soon found out many agencies do not place newlyweds.

Still, the couple was eager to serve. "We felt that if we don't do it now, we won't do it," says Marla, adding, "I was brought up to care for others. It's something I've wanted to do since I was in high school." As part of the youth group at First Mennonite Church in Denver, she participated in a number of service projects.


Mike Schmidt

"It will help me focus on different things ... not to worry about money. I think it will change my perspective," says Phil.

Since both of them are looking at the possibility of graduate school in the next two to three years, they think MVS will also provide them with a much needed break from academia.

Phil hopes an MVS assignment will help him define a specific field of study. "I am interested in environmental things such as pollution or something related to animals," he says. "It is kind of frustrating because I have such wide interests."

Marla thinks it will give her some clues as to her future as well. "Voluntary service gives you more responsibility than many other jobs. I spent one summer volunteering with Interfaith Task Force in Denver. I learned more through working with the homeless there than at my current job," she says.

"The assignments they have are similar to what you would find in the workplace," says Mike. "They are not something that someone my age, especially without a university degree, would normally be able to get."

"I love the life of a student, but I realize the experience is one-sided. It is not practical. There is so much that can be learned from doing," he says. "I see it as a way to test career options. I don't want to waste my degree." He notes that as a result of his time in Guatemala, he learned that he prefers working with junior high and high school students.

While Phil and Marla say it is hard to predict what their experiences in MVS will be like, they know they will

Every 92 minutes in the United States a person age 19 or under dies as a result of gunfire, reports a study by the Children's Defense Fund. The report, which uses 1993 statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics, says gunfire is the second-leading cause of death for those age 10 to 19. Guns are the leading cause of death among black males age 15 to 19. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

What role should economics play in Mennonite missions? This was the theme of a meeting of the Council of International Ministries, an association of 16 Mennonite mission agencies. CIM met March 29-30 in Platte City, Mo. The group's main purpose is fellowship and communication among the various mission agencies. Part of this meeting was spent creating closer ties with Mennonite Economic Development Associates, which specializes in overseas microenterprise development. With the help of economics and mission professors, the group explored how such economic development work could address poverty and further growth of national churches. (MEDA)

• • •

A new order came from the Chinese government early this year demanding again that all places of worship be registered with the government. Registration has been a goal of Chinese public policy since the 1950s, with recent renewed efforts. From Shanghai came several reports of increased police crackdowns on unregistered meeting places. In November 1995 two Shanghai homes were raided by police, who videotaped all present and held the participants for several days. In another case, at least six homes were raided simultaneously. One leader reported that the pressure has caused an increase in the number of meetings, since larger groups can no longer meet. Since the raids began there are thousands more groups meeting in Shanghai. (*Reformed Ecumenical News*)

"Reconciliation in Christian Community" is a Shalom Connections conference to be held Oct. 11-13, at Reba Place Fellowship, Evanston, Ill. It will focus on God's reconciling work in personal, ecumenical and interracial relationships. Cost: $50 U.S. with lodging, $30 without; meals included. For information contact David Janzen, Shalom Mission Communities, 726 Seward, Evanston, IL 60202; (847) 475-8715; fax (847) 328-0772.

• • •

A number of Mennonite communicators recently received DeRose/Hinkhouse awards from the Religious Public Relations Council, Inc. They are as follows: David A. Linscheid, General Conference Mennonite Church, awards of excellence for "Preparing Christ's Way" exhibit and "Communications for Wichita '95"; J. Ron Byler, Nazareth Project, best of class for "Brother, Brother" video and award of excellence for "Stop the Violence" radio ad for Mennonite Board of Missions; Charmayne Denlinger-Brubaker, Mennonite Central Committee, award of excellence for "The Work of Our Hands—MCC 1996 Calendar" and awards of merit for the video, "Free Indeed," and "Laos—Safe Villages" booklet.

• • •

Mennonites in The Netherlands have formed a Dutch version of Mennonite Economic Development Associates. MEDA-Nederland was set up by Avo and Lynn Kaplanian and Kees Knijnenberg. The Kaplanians own a bookstore in Amsterdam; Knijnenberg runs a family printing company and is an organizer of the Menno Simons 500th birthday celebrations. MEDA-Nederland is the third such organization to form outside North America, the others are in Paraguay and Zaire. A special meeting is planned during the Mennonite World Conference Assembly next January to explore forming a federation of MEDA-like organizations.

have to make some adjustments. The couple has learned a few tidbits after a recent phone conversation with some members of the Seattle MVS unit, where they are likely to be placed.

Gaeddert

For example, the couple wants to have a car while they are in MVS, but Seattle unit members feel a car would detract from the spirit of community. (It's still an option for Phil and Marla to take a car to Seattle, but they would have to pay the monthly insurance if the unit does not feel the vehicle is needed.)

Phil Schmidt

Phil and Marla recognize the importance of spending time alone together as a couple in their first year of marriage. They were relieved when MVS staff affirmed their need to make the marriage the top priority.

Already they have decided they will eat meals together in their living space two or three evenings a week. "It might force us to be more conscious about how we spend our time together," says Marla.

The couple isn't too concerned about school debts they have accumulated, since it is possible for some loans to be deferred as a result of their service. In addition, MVS is paying the interest on some of their loans.

Mike worries about "missing out on things while I am gone. I am close to the other students in the Spanish program because we are a small department," he says. "But the pros [of voluntary service] definitely outweigh the cons."

He notes it was during his second and third trips to Guatemala that he began to see "how little we all need to live to be happy and how dangerous it is to have as much as we do—not just because it drains the world's resources, but because we become detached from the world."

That's why he wants to volunteer again. "It helps put it all in perspective. So when I return to university and get bogged down in my assignments, I will remember there are other people who have bigger things to worry about." *Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church*

How to apply to MVS

The following steps are part of the process for applying to Mennonite Voluntary Service:

(1) individual completes application, (2) applicant gathers references, (3) MVS staff interview applicant, (4) MVS staff and applicant discern assignment possibilities, (5) applicant decides whether he or she wants to pursue a specific position, (6) applicant's file is sent to local unit; MVS support committee meets with specific agencies to determine whether applicant is suited for position and makes final decision whether to invite applicant, (7) applicant decides if he or she wants to accept a specific assignment.

It usually takes about four months from the time a person applies to MVS until that person is placed in an assignment, says Kristen Mayhue, personnel director for MVS.

For more information, contact Kristen Mayhue, MVS, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100; or Brad Reimer, MVS, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB, (204) 888-6781.

Record

DEATH

Dyck

Walter H. Dyck died May 16 at age 87. He served as pastor at Burrton (Kan.) Church, 1936-1940; Beatrice (Neb.) Church, 1940-46; Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kan., 1949-1954; First Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, 1955-1962; Arvada (Colo.) Church, 1962-65; Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., 1965-1971, and Carlock (Ill.) and North Danvers churches, 1971-77. He was executive secretary for the

General Conference Mennonite Church 1946-49.

MINISTERS

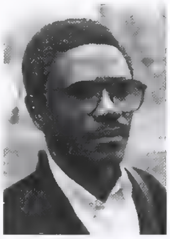
Neil Funk is ending as pastor at Graysville (Man.) Church Aug. 1.

Peter Wiens was installed as assistant pastor at St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church March 17.

Timothy Wong was installed as pastor at Saskatoon Chinese Church April 14.

WORKERS

James F.S. Amstutz, pastor at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., has been named Outstanding Alumnus for 1996 by Bluffton (Ohio) College.



Asuagbor

Greg Asuagbor has been named director of multicultural affairs at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Dean and **Joanne Niswander** have been named Outstanding Alumni for 1996 by Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Lora Oyer has been named Outstanding Alumnus for 1996 by Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Temporary reference librarian: 40 hours a week for 4 to 6 months. Master's degree in library science from ALA-accredited school, proficiency in library automated system(s), database searching and all aspects of professional reference service required. Responsibilities include: overall reference desk service, schedule desk coverage, supervision of student assistants and staff in serials library area. Must be committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume to **Dr. Orval J. Gingerich, Associate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Director of development position available at **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**. Duties include raising funds by writing newsletters, visiting churches and soliciting donors. This half-time position begins July 1.

Send resume or inquiries to **Myrna Miller, Assistant Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th, Chicago, IL 60632; (312) 735-9304**. Application deadline **June 21**.

Director of business affairs—Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Experience with business office functions, computer operations and personnel supervision is required.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Due to an unexpected resignation for health reasons, **Faith & Life Press** invites applications for a **director of customer services.**

Address inquiries and resumes to **Norma J. Johnson, Publisher, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100, fax 316-283-0454, e-mail: normaj@gcmc.org.**

Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D., invites applications for a full-time **director** position to begin Sept. 1. Seeking couple or single person. Salary set according to conference guidelines.

Please send resume to **Dave Waldowski, 2213 S. Oxford Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106; (605) 361-2514 or (605) 336-9189**.

Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in northeastern Pennsylvania, has two positions open:

- **Guest group coordinator:** Responsible for coordinating arrangements and billing for guest groups. Also share in receptionist and other office duties. Year-round, salaried position. Begin July 1996.
- Combined position of **teacher/naturalist** (in Spruce Lake Outdoor School) and **program assistant** (includes role of children's activity leader). Salaried position.

Contact **Paul Beiler at 1-800-822-7505 or fax resume to (717) 595-0328.**

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church is in need of a **pastor**.

Interested candidates please direct inquiries to **John Taves (e-mail): Eileen_Taves@Mindlink.bc.ca** or to **Abe Olfert, (604) 859-4575; (fax) (604) 854-4320**. Resumes may be sent to **West Abbotsford Mennonite Church Search Committee, 31216 King Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6C2.**

Chicago Mennonite Learning Center seeks applicants for **kindergarten teacher** and a **librarian/tutor**. Both are full-time voluntary service positions. Housing, health insurance and a personal stipend are provided. CMLC also needs teachers for general music and physical education. Both involve two days of work each week and are paid positions.

Send resume or inquiries to **Myrna Miller, Assistant Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th, Chicago, IL 60632; (312) 735-9304**.

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has openings for a **biology instructor**, **Spanish instructor** (70 percent), and a **director of alumni relations** (50 percent).

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

$50 SPONSORS A RUSSIAN YOUTH TO CAMP

$50 covers KVI's costs for program supplies, literature, first aid supplies and sports equipment for one youth between the ages of 11-17 to attend camp for 12 days. 100 camps expected in 1996. Camps, individuals, families, Sunday Schools and Youth groups are invited to be sponsors.
Notification of intent to sponsor is requested by June 1.
Tax deductible receipt will be sent.

Kingdom Ventures Inc.

Make cheque payable to:
Kingdom Ventures Inc.
Box 18 Group 540 RR 5
Winnipeg MB R2C 2Z2

Reviews

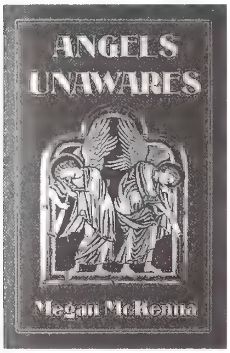
BOOKS

A CLOSER LOOK AT ANGELS

Angels Unawares *by Megan McKenna (Orbis, 1995, 185 pages)*

Reviewed by April Yamasaki, Abbotsford, B.C.

In keeping with the current popularity of angels in both the general and religious press, Megan McKenna's book offers a closer look at angels as they appear in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. These include the more well-known Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel, as well as many more unnamed angels associated with prophecy, hospitality, revelation and other events. In her book, McKenna retells these stories from the Scriptures and from other writings and legends as well.



For the most part, McKenna allows the stories to speak for themselves, and this reflects her intention as a storyteller. There is little commentary and no critique of the angel stories or of their sources. Instead, all is accepted apparently at face value and presented in the same way.

As a collection of stories about angels, McKenna's book makes for interesting reading and has much to offer. In fact, I've already earmarked one of her angel stories as an illustration for a future sermon on prayer. At the same time, however, McKenna's book left me with a mild sense of disappointment.

While the book may well appeal to those already interested in angels, it has little for the mildly skeptical, not-so-convinced readers, or for those looking for more discernment. Does every story about angels from every source carry the same weight of truth? "Just what do we believe about angels?" as McKenna herself asks in her introduction. By the end of her book, I'm still not sure of her answer.

As a storyteller, in this book McKenna clearly limits herself to retelling angel stories drawn from many different sources. Her book certainly reaches this limited goal, but given the current popular interest in angels, I had hoped for a broader treatment of her subject.

JOURNEY THROUGH DEATH

By the Waters of Babylon *by Thomas J. Davis (Eerdmans, 1995, 173 pages)*

Reviewed by Floyd G. Bartel, Newton, Kan.

Davis has written the story of his family's faith journey through illness and death in a helpful and moving way. He and his wife, Melanie, learned of her acute lymphoblastic leukemia on July 1, 1991. She died Feb. 6, 1993.

In these pages Davis shares sensitively, thoughtfully and authentically the anxiety, hope, fear, depression, anger, joy and other experiences of those 19 months as his wife went through treatment, remission and relapse. She was a Presbyterian pastor and he was a teacher, so he often filled the pulpit for her when she was too sick. He cared for his wife and for their two young daughters, then ages 3 and 6. I found especially poignant the way they were able to include the two little girls in their experience. Davis writes, for example, "The sound of a child's heart breaking is the saddest sound I have ever heard. Melanie told the girls that she had been to the doctor. Mave's first words were, 'But your leukemia won't come back, will it?' And then Melanie had to tell them that, yes, Mommy's leukemia was back. Mave said only two words: 'Oh, no.' She said them quietly. Then she started sobbing, a sound I had never really heard before from a small child. Its soft, inward sound was the sound of a soul crashing in on itself."

I appreciated Davis' ability to be reflective without being maudlin. He writes openly about their feelings, but also about their search for meaning in the Christian faith both he and his wife held deeply. They found great comfort and hope, but not without genuine struggle with doubt and despair as well.

Of the various books I've read in the last few years dealing with the loss of a loved one, this is one of the best. Having lost my wife just a couple of years ago to a similar cancer, I could identify quickly with much of the journey Davis recounts. I was not put off by undue sentimentality. He draws one into the story and tells their

EXPERIENCE EUROPE
THIS FALL...
WITH CHRISTIAN SISTERS AND BROTHERS
DURING THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR
OF MENNO SIMONS' BIRTH

beautiful scenery...good fellowship...
learning about our heritage...and much, much more.

JOIN TOURMAGINATION'S
EUROPEAN FALL HARVEST TOUR
SEPTEMBER 26 – OCTOBER 11, 1996
LEADERS: JOHN RUTH & WILMER MARTIN

CALL 1-800-565-0451 TODAY
FOR INFORMATION

TOURMAGINATION

22 KING ST. S., SUITE 401
WATERLOO, ON N2J 1N8

1011 CATHILL ROAD
SELLERSVILLE, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

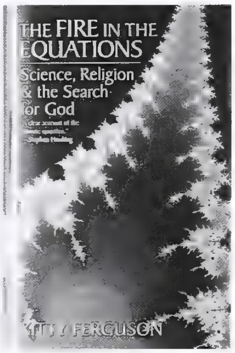
experience well.

I would not hesitate to share this book with a friend. It can help the reader connect more clearly with his or her own experience.

THE SEARCH FOR GOD

The Fire in the Equations: Science, Religion and the Search for God *by Kitty Ferguson (Eerdmans, 1994, 308 pages)*

Reviewed by Don S. Lemons, Wichita, Kan.


THE FIRE IN THE EQUATIONS
Science, Religion & the Search for God
KITTY FERGUSON

According to the dust jacket, Kitty Ferguson is a former professional singer who has transformed herself into an independent scholar. Now she exercises her "voice" in writing books about science, religion and Stephen Hawking. Her latest, *The Fire in the Equations*, investigates the implications of current science (especially physics) for religious belief in a style bordering more closely on science popularization than on apologetics.

One doubts whether a professional physicist, say, could give a more correct, popular account of what she calls the "flash points" of her large subject: big-bang and quantum cosmology, biological evolution and the argument from design, chaos and determinism, and public and private knowledge. She's made appropriate use of her sources, her bibliography contains all the right names and titles, and she's good at metaphor. Most importantly, she explores several sides of an issue and brings to both religion and science an obvious enthusiasm and sympathy.

As a survey of issues, literature and current thinking, *The Fire in the Equations* is fine. However, be prepared for strenuous reading. What makes the book difficult is not so much hair-splitting logic or technical vocabulary but the breathless speed with which Ferguson takes up one difficult subject after another. One also yearns for crisper prose, cleaner arguments and an overarching road map of ideas.

Ferguson is keen to show that science and religion are compatible modes of thinking. One of her themes, for instance, is that the assumptions (for example, that the universe is objectively real and that human experience constitutes trustworthy evidence) behind science and religion are largely the same. However, if the assumptions are the same, the methods are different. Her concluding sentence reads, "Perhaps the most significant difference between science and religion is that science thinks that on this quest [for knowledge] we are entirely on our own. Religion tells us that … Truth also seeks us."

Resources

- **Let All Within Us Praise! Dramatic Resources for Worship** by Patricia J. Shelly (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $15.95 U.S./$22.75 Cdn.) has 45 readers theater scripts and 16 songs. It includes background information on the readings, notes for rehearsing and suggestions for worship planning. To order call toll free 1-800-743-2484.
- **Let All Within Us Praise! Songs for Worship and Celebration** by Patricia J. Shelly (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $4.95 U.S./$6.95 Cdn.) is a collection of 16 songs with chord symbols; many also have piano accompaniment. To order call toll free 1-800-743-2484.
- **Anabaptism: A Dying Candle in a Darkening World** by Walfried E. Goossen discusses Anabaptism through the ages and calls for renewal. Available from Mennonite Books, P.O. Box 13544, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3544; 1-800-465-6564.
- **Mennonites in Canada Media Guide** is designed for media reporters, giving them a broad picture of Mennonite life and beliefs and provides sources of additional information. Available free to media people, or for $5 from MCC Canada Resource Library, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9. It is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.Mennonitecc.ca/mcc/menno-guide/index.html.
- **Want them to grow up knowing God?** is a new oversized postcard available for congregational or personal use in outreach to families; especially for summer Bible school outreach. To order contact MBM Media Ministries, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2497; 1-800-999-3534.
- **La Paix … et Si On La Vait?** is the new French-language version of *Peace —Just Live It!* Available for $33.95 Cdn. postpaid from Institute Biblique Laval, 1775 boul. Edouard-Laurin, Vilee Saint-Laurent, Quebec H4L 2B9; (514) 331-0878; fax (514) 331-0879.
- **Mennonite Women of Lancaster County** by Joanne Hess Siegrist (Good Books, 1996, $14.95 U.S.) is a pictorial story of women's lives from 1855 to 1933.
- **Pastoral Stress: Sources of Tension, Resources for Transformation** by Anthony G. Pappas (Alban Institute, 1995, $18.85 U.S. postpaid) "uncovers the Forces, Sources, Recourses and Resources within stress while identifying tested and practical strategies for Framing, Naming and Taming stress."
- **Small Groups in the Church: A Handbook for Creating Community** by Thomas G. Kirkpatrick (Alban Institute, 1995, $19.65 U.S. postpaid) offers a broad-based small-group approach to creating community and leadership training for leaders to sustain it.
- **Creation at Risk: Religion, Science and Environmentalism**, edited by Michael Cromartie (Eerdmans, 1995, $15 U.S.), contains essays by 10 scholars and activists that explore scientific, religious, moral, philosophical, economic and political claims proposed by environmentalists.
- **One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility** by Paul F. Knitter (Orbis, 1995, $17 U.S.) urges differing religious faiths to unite in the fight to save the environment.
- **How to Be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies** (Jewish Lights, 1996, $24.95 U.S. hardcover) helps guests visiting religious ceremonies of other faiths to feel at ease and avoid hurting anyone's feelings. The religions and denominations covered in the book are those with over 500,000 members in the United States but also include Quaker and Buddhist.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 504
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Make worship our mission

Last year my congregation developed a mission statement. We decided that our chief mission is to worship God. We believe that all of who we are and what we do needs to flow from our worship of God.

After all, the first of the Ten Commandments is to worship God alone (Exodus 20:1-6). And the greatest commandment of all is to "love the Lord your God with all your heart ... soul and ... might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). All else must come out of this love.

Mennonites seem to be task-oriented. We are good at helping others, whether that be through Mennonite Disaster Service, voluntary service or helping others in our congregations—taking a meal to someone who is sick or helping a person fix their porch.

This gift we bring to the larger church must not be minimized. However, the tendency toward service hinders us when we talk about worship. We tend to see worship as a time to rest up for the real work of helping people.

> **Worship is not about good feelings or giving us the energy we need to do certain work. It is our work.**

The word "liturgy," which may sound too high church for some of us, actually means "work of the people." Worship is our work, our main job.

Jean Corbon in his book *The Wellspring of Worship* (Paulist, 1988) calls liturgy "the mystery of the river of life that streams from the Father and the Lamb." The purpose of the liturgy, he writes, is to "water our entire life and render it fruitful."

Our worship is a time when we come together as a community of faith and offer ourselves to God. Throughout our lives, this is our main task. It is what we are to do in our prayers, of course, but doing it publicly helps us live in the reality that we are all sinners who need God's grace even to live. We need that reminder, and we need the strength that comes from making that confession with our sisters and brothers.

I have experienced a mysterious renewing that occurs during and after worship. In my congregation, on successive Sundays in May, we celebrated a wedding during the worship service and we combined a Pentecost service with a farewell for two of our members who are moving to another city to do ministry there. In each of these I sensed the close connection between our worship of God and our so-called mundane daily life.

Grounded: Last week (May 20-24) I took part in antiracism training. In the midst of that hard work we worshiped twice each day. I doubt I could have made it through the week without those worships. I doubt I can continue to work against racism unless I am grounded in worship of the Creator.

I attended the worship symposium May 2-4 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The richest part of that experience for me was worshiping together. I caught a glimpse of how worship helps us experience our intimate union in Christ.

Ultimately, though, worship is not about good feelings or giving us the energy we need to do certain work. It is our work. We are made in our Creator's image, and as such we are to worship our Creator.

Our being consists of receiving from God and offering ourselves to God. Jesus is our pre-eminent example for such work. He said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love" (John 15:9). We are to abide, to dwell, in God's love.

Our worship will help us be in touch with the reality of God's love. It will also draw others to the Lord we worship. As Marlene Kropf says in her article (pages 3-7), "People are looking for an encounter with the divine—not talk about God but experience of God."

As Mennonites we have agreed on a confession of faith and a vision of healing and hope. Yet we have given little attention to worship. Instead we borrow from other traditions and often fight over whether to use hymns or songs of praise from an overhead projector.

Let us make worship a central part of our lives as congregations. Let us make it our mission. We need to address the hunger in people's lives for God's love, and we need to make that love more visible in our worship and let it then flow through our lives in whatever we do. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

Does anyone pray for enemies? / p. 9

'More sing, Mama' / p. 10

A little heaven on earth / p. 11

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
JUL 1 '96
ELKHART
LIBRARY

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 12
JUNE 25, 1996

WHEN CHURCHES SHOULD NOT BORROW

- The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome (page 3)
- Business debt vs. church debt (page 6)
- Vacation expenses (page 7)

Prologue

Many of our congregations seem to take it for granted that we have a building and add to it as our numbers expand. But increasingly our congregations are faced with tough decisions about how to use the resources we have.

In our lead article (pages 3-6), Ray Bowman questions the tradition of simply deciding to build and then doing whatever it takes to raise the money. Before we decide to commit money to a building or renovation project on our buildings, we should evaluate how such a project will carry forward our congregation's mission.

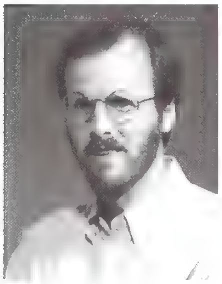
Your congregation may want to use this article to study this issue together, especially if you are thinking about borrowing money to do some kind of renovation.

In a humorous piece, Bill Hallsted looks at ways we may be depriving the church of our giving (page 7).

Columnist Marlene Kropf applies prayer to Jesus' command to love our enemies (page 9).

Sara Wenger Shenk writes about the importance of music in family life (page 10).

Retired Mennonite minister Nick Janz has a way with animals of all kinds. Meet his friend Simba on page 11.



Karl Shelly shows how Jesus was willing to have his work interrupted by someone in need (page 12).

On our editorial page, Vern Preheim, who leaves in August as general secretary of our conference, shares his dreams for the future. *gh*

Next issue: Choosing to be Mennonite

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

Contents

FEATURES

3 The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome

Why congregations should reduce the proportion of their budget spent on facilities and give more of their resources for mission

6 Business debt vs. church debt

7 Vacation expenses

Bob wanted the church to pay for his vacation, but the preacher would not do it.

DEPARTMENTS

8 Letters
9 Learning to pray
10 A way home
11 Profile
12 Bible
13 News
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

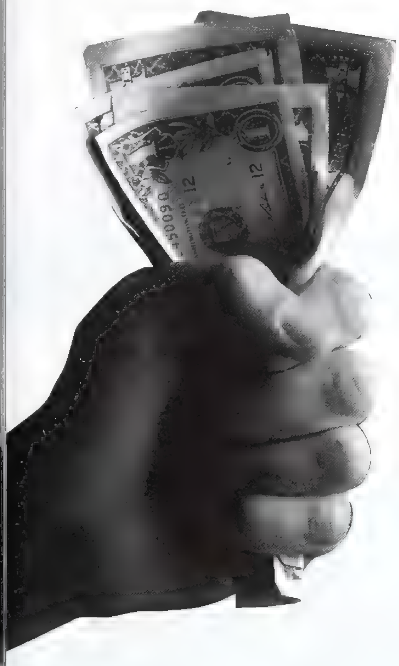
The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General Conference Mennonite Church

THE BEG, BORROW AND 'STEAL' SYNDROME

The long interruption for fund-raising had destroyed the spirit of worship.



Ray Bowman with Eddy Hall

As my wife, Sally, and I entered the 3,500-seat sanctuary, the warm voices of gathering worshipers welcomed us. Sparkling Christmas trees, graceful garlands and the cheerful clamor of the orchestra tuning up heightened our anticipation. Though we were visitors, we knew the music here was always excellent. This was Christmas Sunday; today it would be extraordinary. And the pastor, we knew, was one of the best preachers around.

Congregations need to reduce the proportion of their budget spent on facilities in order to give more of their resources toward mission.

Sure enough, the congregational singing, the prayer time, and the special music all invited us to worship. But then something happened that I won't soon forget. The pastor stepped to the pulpit and announced that by the following Sunday the church had to raise over $100,000 for its end-of-the-year mortgage payment. Then he went on to make a long appeal for funds.

Though his appeal was as gracious as anyone could have made it, by the time it was over our focus was no longer on the Christ child; it was on paying the bills. The pastor went on to preach an excellent sermon, but I couldn't enjoy it. The long interruption for fund-raising had destroyed the spirit of worship. Nor did the members welcome the appeal any more than we visitors. They had long since grown tired of almost every Sunday sitting through yet another request to pay debt.

But of all the people there, the one who most abhorred what happened that morning was the pastor. He had been forced to take on the thankless task of every week begging people to pay a debt far more massive than the church could reasonably bear. He later told me, "The burden of debt is so heavy, sometimes I don't think I'll survive."

> *A church that spends freely on itself while giving far less to others may be driven more by institutionalism than by a sense of mission.*

This church, though certainly not by design, had fallen into a pattern of begging, borrowing and "stealing." The pastor was forced to beg because of the church's extensive borrowing, and to make debt payments the church was having to "steal" funds needed for ministry. And I was partly to blame.

The difference a hat makes

Twenty years earlier this church had hired me to design their building, a building for which they borrowed heavily, and I had cheered them on. In fact, as a church architect I had become something of an expert at persuading hesitant church leaders to borrow to the max and showing them how to do it.

This church had bought wholesale into the borrow-and-building thinking I so enthusiastically advocated. They had borrowed for various projects, each time expecting them to bring growth, but they had been repeatedly disappointed. And now paying the debt had to come first, even when that meant using funds urgently needed for ministry.

For most of my life I had considered all this normal. I had seen pastors beg for money so often that I thought nothing of it. I was so used to churches putting debt payments ahead of ministry that I had accepted it as the way things had to be. And, of course, I had not only seen church borrowing as normal; I had enthusiastically promoted it.

Then I changed jobs. I became a consultant helping churches coordinate planning of facilities, finances and ministries. No longer was my focus on building church buildings; it was on building churches.

Through working with scores of churches on their finances—some thriving, others fighting for their financial lives—I learned that the beg, borrow and "steal" syndrome is widespread, but it is also curable. Pastors don't have to beg, congregations don't have to borrow, and churches don't have to "steal" funds from ministry to pay for institutional maintenance. Though the process is neither quick nor easy, a financially burdened church can replace indebtedness with provision, institutionalism with purpose and insufficiency with plenty.

From indebtedness to provision

Early on in my consulting I noticed a pattern: The more debt a church had in relation to its income, the less financial freedom for ministry it tended to have. What would happen, I wondered, if churches built debt-free—living within the income God provided—and used the saved interest for ministry?

Next I realized that most of the churches asking me for building advice didn't need to build at all; they had better alternatives. I began helping churches devise creative ways to get more out of their facilities. While each situation was unique, some solutions proved useful in many churches.

- **Move classes to the right size rooms.** Moving large classes to large rooms and small classes to small rooms gives larger classes room to keep growing.
- **Replace pews with chairs.** Good church chairs are not cheap, but they cost far less than building. By replacing pews with chairs, some churches make their largest single space, the worship area, useful for a variety of ministries seven days a week.
- **Build a storage shed.** When rooms are used as storage closets, they can be freed up by building a low-cost storage building.
- **Add a fellowship foyer.** For a growing church to get out of debt and stay out of debt, it must hold multiple worship services. To make this practical, some churches add a fellowship foyer big enough that those leaving one service have room to visit with those arriving for the next.

Using these and other innovations, some congregations have been able to grow to two or three times the size for which their buildings were originally designed without needing a major building program. Then when they have built, by building intensive multiple-use facilities, they have cut the number of square feet needed by half or more.

By avoiding paying interest and building multiple-use buildings, some churches have saved 50 to 75 percent of their construction costs—money they could then use for the real work of the church, meeting people's needs in the name of Christ.

From institutionalism to purpose

I've read scores of church mission statements, and I haven't read a bad one yet. Every church has good intentions. But the church, like any other organization, can get caught up in pouring most of its time, money and energy into maintaining its own structures and programs until its mission gets little more than lip service.

One way to gauge your church's true priorities is to go through your church budget line by line, assigning each dollar of spending to one of six categories. Three of these categories—facilities, staff and operations—pay for maintaining church structures and ministry programs. The other three are for sharing—money the church gives away to meet the needs of people outside the community, people in the community and people within the church.

Maintenance and ministries: facilities, staff, operations.

Sharing: People outside the community, people in the community, people within the church.

How does your church's spending on maintenance and ministry (facility, staff and operations) compare with its spending on sharing? A church that spends freely on itself while giving far less to others may be driven more by institutionalism than by a sense of mission.

Is spending among the three sharing categories balanced? Giving to world mission is important, but it is no substitute for personal involvement in ministry to people in need right on your doorstep. For every dollar they give to world mission, I urge churches also to earmark a dollar to meet needs within their own communities and, even more important, a dollar for financial needs of people within the church. If we neglect the needs of our own spiritual family, the Bible says, we don't have God's love in us (1 John 3:17).

When a church is reducing the proportion of its budget spent on facilities, it is weakening the grip of institutionalism. When it is increasing spending for sharing and outreach, it is being guided by its sense of purpose. When a church is moving toward the goal of devoting one-third of all staff time, facility use and operations spending to ministries of intentional outreach, it is learning to put its money where its mission statement is.

From insufficiency to plenty

Growth costs. A nongrowing church doesn't need much money. If the people give the church 3 percent of their income, that is usually plenty to keep it going. But for a church to sustain modest growth, the people need to give an average of 5 to 6 percent of their income. And for a church to sustain growth of 10 percent a year or more requires a giving level of 8 to 12 percent.

Why? Because it takes money to operate ministries of intentional outreach. It takes money to add staff. It takes money to adapt or build facilities. It takes money to sustain growth.

How can people be inspired to give at this level? A generation ago, institutional loyalty motivated much church giving. Today baby boomers and baby busters are far less likely to give out of institutional loyalty than their parents and grandparents were.

No longer was my focus on building church buildings; it was on building churches.

The secret to inspiring people to give generously, even sacrificially, in today's church is to invite them to give not to an institution, but to a vision.

One pastor explains his church's approach this way: "We don't say, 'We need this amount of money.' We say, 'This is the ministry God is calling us to do, and by the way, this is what it will cost.' The vision for ministry comes first, finances are secondary." He has discovered that when people have a vision for ministry worth giving themselves to, they love to give.

• • • • • • • • • • •

The secret to inspiring people to give generously, even sacrificially, in today's church is to invite them to give not to an institution, but to a vision.

Set free to fly

A church struggling financially is like an airplane that is overloaded, off course and underfueled. The load of debt is so heavy that the church uses most of its energy just staying aloft. A church whose mission statement gives priority to ministry and outreach but whose budget gives priority to institutional maintenance is like a plane whose flight path doesn't match its flight plan. And a church whose giving is a fraction of what is needed to sustain vigorous growth is like a plane carrying only part of the fuel needed to reach its destination.

By itself, no amount of financial expertise can make ministry happen. But if a passion for ministering to people inspires your church to do whatever it takes to get out of debt, reorder budget priorities and multiply giving, your church can enjoy a greater freedom for ministry than ever before. No longer overloaded, no longer off course, no longer underfueled, your church can be set free to fly.

Adapted from When Not to Borrow: Unconventional Financial Wisdom to Set Your Church Free *by Ray Bowman with Eddy Hall (Baker, 1996). Ray Bowman, a consultant living in Larkspur, Colo., works with churches to coordinate planning of facilities, finances and ministries. Eddy Hall, a free-lance writer and editor, lives in Goessel, Kan. They are also authors of* When Not to Build: An Architect's Unconventional Wisdom for the Growing Church *(Baker, 1992).*

BUSINESS DEBT VS CHURCH DEBT

Debt has both benefits and risks for the business owner, but the church that borrows usually assumes all the risks of debt while enjoying few of its benefits.

1. Business property produces income. Business owners borrow to buy real estate because they expect the property to generate more than enough income to make the mortgage payments. They expect the property to generate a profit.

Church buildings don't produce income. Churches do not receive business income from their buildings. For churches, the cost of buildings is an expense, not a business investment.

2. Business property usually appreciates. Business owners may prefer to buy buildings, even with heavy indebtedness, rather than rent, because good quality buildings usually increase in value.

But the resale value of church buildings decreases rapidly. Generally, a church building's market value is 50 cents on the dollar—or less—compared to the book value. This means a church facility that costs $1 million to build will usually have a resale value of a half million dollars or less the moment it is finished.

3. Business debt brings tax advantages. Interest on business debt is tax-deductible. Businesses can deduct depreciation expense on buildings, even when their market value is appreciating. Depending on the tax laws in effect at the time, profits from the sale of business property—capital gains—may be taxed at a lower rate than other business income. All operating expenses related to business buildings—such as utilities, insurance, repairs and custodial services—are tax-deductible.

Churches get no tax advantages from owning property because they don't pay income taxes.

4. Businesses can use real estate as leverage to make further investments. Once real estate investors build up equity in property, they can borrow against that equity to buy more property.

Church property cannot be leveraged.

5. If a business gets into financial trouble, it can declare bankruptcy. Most business debt involves risk, so it's a normal part of doing business for some investments to go sour, sometimes leading to bankruptcy. Corporations can go bankrupt, yet the owners' personal finances are not at risk. The owners can use the bankruptcy laws to avoid personal responsibility, then go on with their lives.

A church cannot declare bankruptcy without dissolving the church. Besides the fact that bankruptcy ends a church's existence, God's people have a moral responsibility to repay all legitimate debts, no matter how difficult repayment may be. It is the "wicked" who "borrow and do not pay back" (Psalm 37:21).

For these reasons and more, except in certain carefully defined situations, I no longer encourage churches to borrow. Instead I advocate what I call the principle of provision: **A church should build only when it can do so within the income God has provided and without using funds needed for the church's current and future ministries to people.**

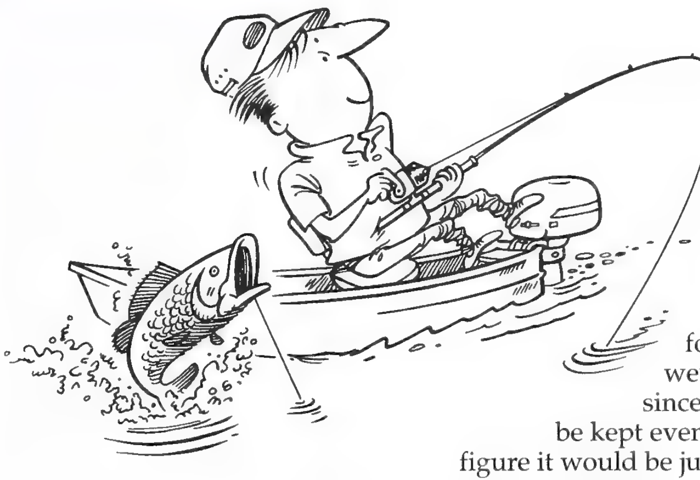
For the last 15 years I have recommended this principle to the growing churches I have worked with. The results I have witnessed in those churches that have embraced this approach have more than confirmed to me that provision, not indebtedness, is the road to the church's greatest possible financial freedom for ministry.

From When Not to Borrow *by Ray Bowman with Eddy Hall (Baker Books, 1996)*

VACATION EXPENE

Bob wanted the church to pay for his vacation, but the preacher would not do it.

Bill D. Hallsted



"I was just wondering if you could have the treasurer write me a check for about $500." The preacher's confusion was apparent. "What's the problem, Bob? We do have a benevolent fund, but I didn't realize you were in a bad spot."

"Oh, I'm not," Bob replied. "We just want to take a little fishing trip, and we'd like the church to help out with our expenses."

Now the preacher was truly confused. You could tell. Preachers aren't often left without words.

Seeing the confusion, Bob explained. "I just figured since other people had the church help pay for their vacations and their fishing trips and their weekend recreational things and all that, they'd probably help with mine as well."

The preacher finally regained his voice. "The church doesn't pay for anybody's vacation. We don't finance anybody's fishing trips."

"Sure you do." Bob protested. "I was talking to Sam yesterday, and he told me you'd helped him to the tune of over $600, just this year."

The preacher was incredulous. "Sam said we gave him over $600 to use for his family's recreation?"

"Yeah. Well, not quite that way. He didn't say you gave it to him. He just used it anyway."

The preacher shook his head. "Now I'm really confused."

"OK, look," Bob scooted his chair a little closer and leaned forward. "How many Sundays has Sam's family been absent this summer?"

"I'm not sure. A lot. They've been gone to the lake a lot, and had some family reunions, and quite a number of things. They've missed quite a few Sundays."

"Exactly. Now Sam told me that when they settled back after all the activity was over, they figured out how much their tithe should be for all the Sundays they missed during the year. It blew his mind. He said it added up to more than $700. And how they'd used so much money with all their running around this summer, they didn't have an extra $700 lying around. So he said they just decided to drop in $100 extra, and call it square. I figure that leaves the church paying for $600 worth of their vacations."

The preacher shook his head sadly. "Unfortunately, I'm afraid that's not unusual."

"My point exactly," Bob squirmed with excitement. "It's a common practice. Now, since I've been careful to tithe every week—and I have, you know—and when we went on vacation, I left a check for the Sundays we'd be gone—and since things ought to be kept even all around—I figure it would be just as fair and maybe a little more honest if you had the treasurer write a check so it will show that it was the church that helped pay for my fishing trip. Since the church has done that for all these other people, the church sorta owes it to me. Don't you think?"

"But not everybody does that, Bob. Most of our people are really conscientious. If they aren't able to make up their missing tithes all at once, they make it up over a period of a month or two, but they do make it up. They recognize that money belongs to God. They recognize the church's expenses go on just the same, whether they're in church or out fishing. They really don't force the church to pay for their recreation."

Bob was still insistent. "Some of them do."

The preacher shook his head sadly. "I know. A few. But not many, really. Anyway, there isn't any way I can have the treasurer write you a check. Even if a few people do finance their recreation that way, that doesn't make it right."

Bob seemed a little subdued. "I guess I'll just have to fish a little closer to home, then. Oh well, it was worth a try. See ya, Preacher."

The door closed softly behind him. The preacher shook his head one more time and went back to work.

Bill D. Hallsted lives in Griffith, Ind.

Letters

● ● ● ● ▼

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW NAME

I want to express my appreciation for the excerpts from *Godward* (Feb. 27 issue) and for the article "To Be or Not to Be Rebaptized" by Dorothea Janzen (May 14 issue, page 6).

Sometimes it seems that choosing a name will be the most difficult part of the MC/GC merger. Here are some ideas that may or may not have already been considered. Perhaps *The Mennonite* and *Gospel Herald* could print the suggested names from time to time in order to get the reaction of the rank and file. My suggestions are as follows:

- Merely remove the / and call it Mennonite Church General Conference.
- Just use MC/GC until the old generation passes and let the next generation choose a name.
- Do as a number of other denominations have and call it United Mennonite Church. Then years from now, if other Mennonite groups want to join, there won't need to be another name change. *Elvina Martens via internet*

DISAGREES WITH SIDER

Ron Sider (April 23 issue, page 18) considers "the poor" as the lens through which to evaluate politics. This contradicts his later statement of being "opposed to one-issue politics." While concern for the poor is important, Leviticus 19:15 speaks directly to this issue: "Be honest and just when you make decisions in legal cases; do not show favoritism to the poor or fear the rich."

He also said he "believes God has a position on each issue. But you and I don't know what it is." If we use the most basic element of our Bible, the Decalogue, we have a good basis from which to understand God's position. The Ten Commandments are more than a morally relative list of rules. They are foundational to a free and virtuous society.

Sider also shows his naivete with the political process in stating, "Politics is not the only way to change the world." He is optimistic and betrays the Mennonite heritage if he thinks the coercing and forcing of the political process will create any lasting change. Freedom (and voluntarism) is the only way to bring about meaningful and lasting change.

He also states that "the growing economic gap is fundamentally immoral." I wonder what moral code he subscribes to. Obviously it is one that embraces envy and covetousness. God created us all as unique individuals with various abilities. Those abilities when applied to the physical world will manifest themselves in various levels of wealth. Some people have the ability to produce goods and services that other people will actually pay for—they then become wealthy. Others, like myself, do not have that skill and thus must rent their labor to someone who does. My wealth is then determined by the tasks I can perform for the employer who is serving the needs of a customer—the result is that my wealth will be less. There is nothing immoral about wealth gaps as long as they are not the result of immoral activities. If a person "plays" by the rules, there is nothing immoral about the wealth that their God-given abilities have produced for them. What they do with the wealth may be a question for our churches, but not the wealth itself.

Free choice was one of the first things God gave us. We are free to do as we please, to accept God or reject him. We can willingly do good or evil. In the political arena, though, freedom should be viewed as freedom from being forced to do someone else's bidding. We should be restrained from aggression and evil, but we should never be in a position where force is used to compel someone to do something they do not want to do, good or bad. Good deeds should be voluntary. It is only then that there will be a blessing for the giver and the receiver. To use force to "do good" does not sit well with my understanding of being Mennonite. Maybe Mennonites now embrace violence for certain things. *Royce Buller, Goshen, Ind.*

BAPTIZE ADULTS, NOT INFANTS

I was baptized as an infant in the Lutheran Church, then later as an adult I became convinced that infant baptism was unscriptural and that baptism was for believers only, so I had the minister of an independent charismatic church "rebaptize" me.

I was a pacifist before I even heard of Anabaptism, but when I began to read about the Anabaptists I became convinced that I should join a denomination that took the scriptural positions on war and baptism. At first I joined the Church of the Brethren, then later the Mennonite church.

In "To Be or Not to Be Rebaptized" (May 14 issue, page 6), Dorothea Janzen suggests that 16th-century Anabaptists saw baptism in part as a way of separating themselves from the state church, "which is not a relevant issue at this time in our history."

Certainly 16th-century Anabaptists rejected the state church, but I firmly believe they opposed infant baptism primarily on scriptural grounds, which is the same reason I originally rejected infant baptism. I'm sure many people in the various denominations that practice believer's baptism are convinced that infant baptism is scripturally unsound and don't even know that there was once a state church that persecuted people who practiced believer's baptism.

So whether there is currently a state church or not, there are sound reasons to insist that prospective Mennonites be required to submit to believer's baptism. Jesus himself was baptized as an adult by John the Baptist, "to fulfill all righteousness." So followers of Christ should be willing to be baptized just as Christ was. *Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

CORRECTION

Thank you for publishing the article "Do God's Work Regardless of Risks" (April 23 issue, page 6), concerning my work at the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church and my background.

However, I ask that a correction be made. The reason for our immigration to Toronto in 1973 was not, as stated, "By 1972, the couple began to worry about how safe they were from the Communists." At that point in time, I and my wife were of the opinion that Hong Kong is a British colony full of injustice. From a Christian's point of view, it is a sinful government. We felt we did not belong to this particular government, and this government was not for us. This was the cause for our departure. *Winfred Soong, Toronto*

Learning to pray

Does anyone pray for enemies?

This may be one of Jesus' most difficult teachings to follow.

Marlene Kropf

A businessman went to his pastor to seek counsel regarding a conflict at work. After the pastor listened to the story, she said, "Perhaps you should pray for your enemies."

"Why would I do that?" the man asked. "I've never heard us pray for enemies on Sunday morning."

Though offering prayers for our enemies may be an all-too-rare occurrence, Jesus instructed his disciples, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Perhaps the greatest gift of love one can offer in a conflict is to hold one's enemies before God and pray God's blessing upon them.

First steps first: The first step in praying for an enemy is the admission that we have an enemy. Because Christians are called to love others as Jesus loves us, we are reluctant to admit that we harbor hatred or ill-will toward another. Yet all of us at one time or another will get caught in conflicts at home, at work or school, or sometimes even in the church.

When we find ourselves embroiled in conflict, the quickest, cleanest way to resolution is to acknowledge the unpleasant truth: We have made an enemy. I remember how humiliated I felt when I discovered how deeply I disliked a high school student I was teaching. A loud, unruly lad, he sparked anger everywhere. When his obnoxious behavior began to seriously disrupt the learning process for others, I realized something more than the usual discipline procedures would be required.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

In desperation I admitted to God how much I detested the young man. What I most wanted was to get rid of him. But day after day he showed up in my classroom—defiant, slovenly, mean. One day I gritted my teeth and said, "God, I am going to love this young man if it kills me!" Slowly, bit by bit, my hatred melted and I began to see the student as God may have seen him—frightened, lonely, poor. The miracle of prayer for an enemy transformed us both. Though we never became best friends, we managed to respect and tolerate one another.

What if we found courage to name our enemies—people of other races, religions, or economic levels? What if we brought before God our political enemies and asked God to bless them?

Praying for another's good: Simply admitting our hatred is an important step. More is required, however, if we are to follow in the way of Jesus. Difficult as it may seem, we are called to pray God's blessing upon our enemies.

When the Hymnal Council was evaluating worship resources for *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, I remember being startled one day to come across a most unusual prayer (no. 727):

Merciful and loving Father,
we ask you with all our hearts
to bountifully pour out on our enemies
whatever will be for their good.
Above all, give them a sound and uncorrupt mind
with which they might honor and love you
and also love us.
Do not let their hating us turn to their harm.
Lord, we desire their amendment and our own.
Do not separate them from us by punishing them;
deal gently with them and join them to us.
Help us to see that we have all been called
to be citizens of the everlasting city;
let us begin to love each other now because love is the end we seek. Amen.

What struck me most about the prayer was the deep desire for God's generosity and the capacity to see beyond the present conflict. Echoing in the prayer were the words of Jesus on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

Open to transformation: I wonder what would happen in our personal prayers or Sunday morning worship if we were to regularly include prayers for enemies in our intercessions.

What if we found courage to name our enemies—people of other races, religions, or economic levels? What if we brought before God our political enemies and asked God to bless them? What if, at times, we even named spouses, children, parents or fellow church members? Might we set God's Spirit free to transform our most cherished hatreds? Might we discover a wellspring of love that would create new relationships of care and respect? Might we become channels for the grace and mercy of Christ in the world?

A way home

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

'More sing, Mama'

We can fill our homes and our lives with music.

Sara Wenger Shenk

Music is one of the central passions of my life. If I had another life to live, I think that I would devote much more of it to the study and making of music. I love to sing and inspire others with songs that have moved me.

I don't have any special training in music, other than years of piano lessons and participation in choirs. I don't feel particularly gifted in music and know that my amateur attempts at making and leading music are flawed. But my deficiency only enhances my gratitude for the wonderful music that flows into my life from a multitude of sources every day.

In our family life I've tried to find opportunities to develop an appreciation for music in our children. While nursing and rocking them to sleep I reached back in my memory for lullabies and sought out new ones to learn. Our first child got so used to my singing him to sleep that he wouldn't let me stop until he drifted off. I might be in a room nearby singing as I worked, but when I stopped, thinking he was asleep, I'd often hear a little voice calling out, "More sing, Mama." Too many nights of "more sing" made me restless to find another solution so I recorded myself singing and simply turned on the tape when I ran out of voice. Our little son never knew the difference.

We've learned songs to sing around the table before we eat. We've occasionally sung hymns around the piano. We've encouraged our children to take music lessons, piano and guitar and to sing in a school or church choir when the opportunity arose. In our extended families there have been fun and worshipful times of singing in which our children learn songs that have special family memories attached to them. We often have music playing in the house from the radio or our eclectic collection of music: classical, folk, gospel, rock, bluegrass, hymns. We encourage our children to expand their tastes and learn to appreciate new styles of music. We go to concerts and other musical events when we find the time. The church we now attend is intentionally multicultural and tries to reflect that diversity in its musical offerings each Sunday.

> ***All of us can draw on the musical resources around us to provide our children with one of God's priceless gifts of self-expression.***

Dave Linscheid

Heartbeat of life: While music hasn't been a centerpiece of our family life, I always hoped that by weaving it into the fabric of our daily life, we might draw our children into its rhythms. I longed for them to be captivated by music's power to express the heartbeat of life. I wanted them to discover how Scripture comes alive in music, how the prayer of the heart wings heavenward in music and how our deepest loves and griefs can find expression in music when words won't suffice.

It hasn't always been clear that our children would pick up the beat. As they entered adolescence it seemed that singing had less and less appeal. Only certain kinds of music were deemed OK to listen to and buy. It no longer felt appropriate to join in congregational singing, and singing around the table or piano at home lost any kind of whole-hearted participation.

But then, something happened. A choir director at the local Mennonite high school, with expertise and sensitivity, demonstrated what an art and a joy it is to sing. He taught reluctant young men and women how to sing together and created a group experience that energized everyone. As my husband and I sit and listen to the music program these young people and their director have put together we are stunned by their transformation and their obvious pleasure in a job well done. Truly, young people singing together songs of worship from countries around the world must be one of the most profoundly formative experiences our church can offer.

And it's OK to sing together as a family again. In fact, at Christmas we worked up a number to do as a Christmas gift for the extended family—one son on the piano, one on the guitar, and our daughter with her ankle bells joined in singing with Mom and Dad. It was good to be able to do music together again.

The blessing of music available to us doesn't depend on our being able to sing or make our own. All of us can draw on the musical resources around us to provide our children with one of God's priceless gifts of self-expression. Whether or not we consider ourselves musically literate or gifted, there are many ways we can fill our homes and lives with music.

A little heaven on earth

Nick Janz always wanted to play with animals.

Marj Heinrichs

Nick Janz has found a little heaven on earth. When he was a young boy in Siberia, his father would pray nightly with his sons and then he would tell them stories about heaven and all the animals there, including lions.

"Every night I would pray that I wanted to be in heaven. I wanted to play with the animals," Nick says.

"Heaven" turned out to be a game farm in Manitoba, where Janz has "played" with a large variety of animals, including lions.

"It's a little more work than heaven," quips Nick's wife Sara.

In fact, the 83-year-old dairy farmer and General Conference Mennonite Church minister turned game farm keeper has recently turned over the farm to children Len and Hermina.

"We're not going to try to keep up with him as far as energy level goes," says Hermina Janz of her father-in-law.

When Nick sold his dairy farm, he thought he would have a little hobby farm for his children and grandchildren to enjoy. He bought a few beef cattle and a few buffalo.

Gradually the farm grew. Deer came to make their home on the farm. The Natural Resources Ministry heard about Nick and asked him to care for three orphaned bears.

Today the Cottonwood Corner Game Farm is home to an African lion, tigers, a jaguar, cougar, bears, deer, wolves, bison, elk, llama, raccoon, goats, geese, donkeys, peacocks, rabbits, fish and a pot-bellied pig. At one time they even had a camel.

"When I work with the animals I always think of how God made them so nice and so clever; it always brings me closer to God," Nick says. "If people would care as much for their children as the animals do, we would have a different world. Animals would starve for their young," he says.

"I've worked with lots of people; animals are easier," Nick says. "They listen better than people."

A garden rake: Nick is reluctant to pick a favorite animal, but he does like Simba, the lion he raised from a cub, who weighs in at 700 pounds. Simba likes him to scratch his belly with a garden rake.

Now that he is retired from the game farm, Nick says he will help out more at the Elim Mennonite Church again. He has become an usher.

"From a minister to an usher," he laughs and explains, "If you are an usher you have lots of time to talk to people."

Talking to people is something he loves to do. He's been able to do lots of it as thousands of school children and adults tour the game farm. In the United Nations Year of the Disabled, admission was free to the disabled, and they came from far and wide to take advantage of the offer.

"We figured it was not just a game farm; we should be able to help people, too," Nick says.

The Janz retirement home is a mobile home nestled into the game farm. Nick says he will slow down a bit, but he intends to help his son when he needs it, and perhaps "buy me a female lion and raise lion babies, make them tame."

Marj Heinrichs is a Mennonite Reporter *correspondent from Rosenort, Man. This article is reprinted from* Mennonite Reporter.

Marj Heinrichs

Favorite animal: *Nick Janz with his friend Simba*

Bible

On the road to Jairus' house

Take seriously advocacy for the poor.

Karl S. Shelly

Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw Jesus, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So he went with him.

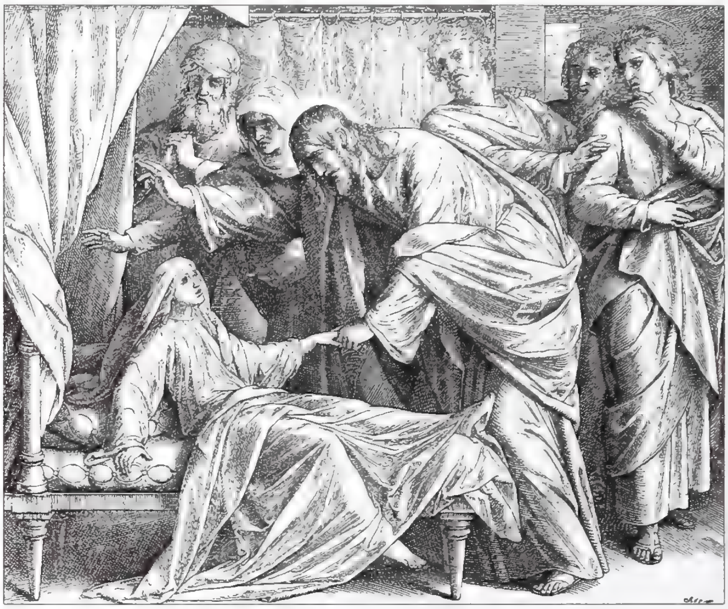
And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for 12 years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. … Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease" (excerpted from Mark 5:22-34).

The good news is that we as a people of faith are on the road to Jairus' house. The challenge, however, is whether we will be touched by people who are suffering as we pass along the way.

The road to Jairus' house is a worthwhile one to take. It is the road we take when we respond to needs within our faith community. It is the road Jesus took upon hearing of Jairus' plight.

Jairus, as described in the Gospel of Mark, is a synagogue leader. He is, undoubtedly, well-respected and well-cared-for. He is a godly man esteemed by his community—he is "one of our own."

A sense of justice: We Mennonites have a fairly good track record of taking care of our own. Our local congregations often establish sharing funds to help members with unexpected needs. Churchwide, we've developed a health insurance system for Mennonites and secured a place for conscientious objectors within our country's legal framework. And when proposed changes in the law threaten these achievements, we respond in advocacy. Empowered by a sense of justice, we organize our congregations, petition our political leaders and write letters to members of our government. We rise up and travel down the road to Jairus' house. Alleluia!


RNS

Will we as individuals and as a church acknowledge the power and the resources we possess? *Jesus healing Jairus' daughter*

But inevitably our road brings us in contact with the needs of those outside our church. If our eyes are open, we see the faces of the poor—people, like the woman in Mark's story, whose names we do not know but who have endured much, spent all they have and grow ever more desperate.

In the United States the number of people trapped in poverty is on the rise. An enormous gulf separating the rich and the poor is widening at an alarming rate. The wealthiest 1 percent of the population (2.5 million people) now has nearly as much after-tax income as the bottom 40 percent (about 100 million people).

Yet our advocacy for the poor is often tentative and uninspired. It is in contrast with Jesus, who not only acknowledges the touch of one in desperate need but also delays his trip in order to heal her.

Ched Myers, biblical scholar and advocate for the disenfranchised, contends that the primary significance of this gospel episode "lies in the fact that Jesus accepts the priority of the [request] of this woman over the [proper] request of the synagogue leader. … It dramatizes what today is referred to … as the 'preferential option for the poor.'" Jesus drives this point home when he refers to the nameless woman as "daughter," thus making her one of his own.

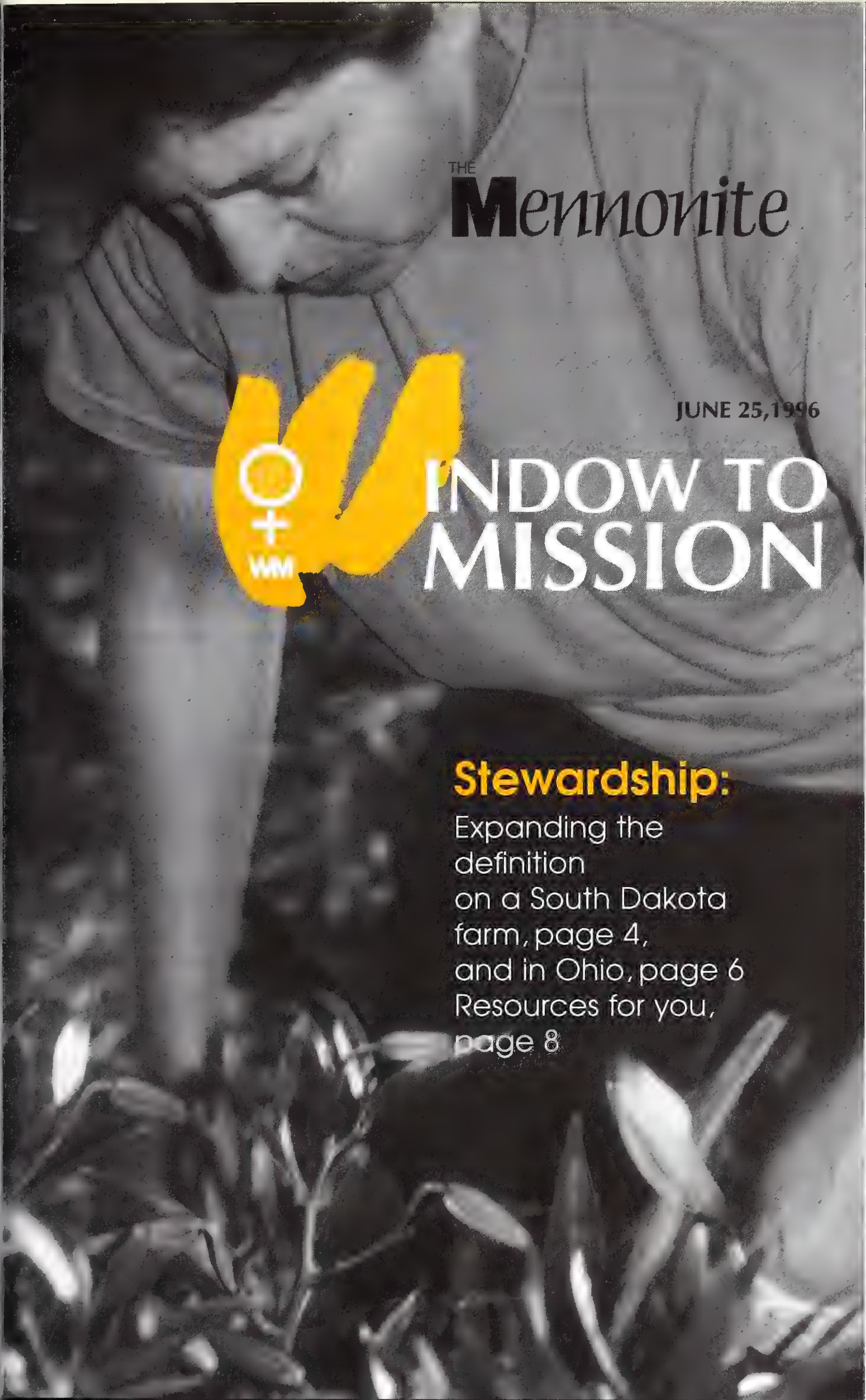
David, a teenager living in one of the poorest sections of the United States and given voice in Jonathan Kozol's powerful book *Amazing Grace,* forcefully challenges our hesitancy to do advocacy: "I believe what the rich have done to the poor people in this city is something that a preacher could call evil. Somebody has power. Pretending that they don't so they don't need to use it to help people—that is my idea of evil."

We as a people are not omnipotent, but all too often we pretend there's nothing we can do. Will we as individuals and as a church acknowledge the power and the resources we possess? Will we allow the touch of the poor to bring that power forth? It may depend upon whether we see people who are financially poor as one of our own.

Karl S. Shelly works for the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office.

THE
Mennonite

JUNE 25, 1996



WINDOW TO MISSION

Stewardship:

Expanding the definition
on a South Dakota farm, page 4,
and in Ohio, page 6
Resources for you,
page 8

> And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. (2 Cor. 9:8)

CONTENTS

3 **Loved into faith**
by Anna K. Juhnke
Gui-Yun Zhou's story

4 **Managing…ourselves**
by Anette Eisenbeis
Decisions on stewardship

6 **Signs along the way**
by Jocele Meyer
Seeking the kingdom

8 **Resources for you**

9 **Journey thoughts**
by Bek Linsenmeyer

10 **Servant or slave, sister or friend?**
Interview with Lois Barrett by Bek Linsenmeyer

11 **That our work and worship may be one**
Interview with Norma Johnson by Bek Linsenmeyer
A holistic way of seeing life

12 **Good things on the east side**
by Jeannie Zehr
Lety Cortez—missionary in training

13 **Introducing our new study guide: *Household of God: Sent into God's World***

14 **Roundtable**
by Susan Jantzen

15 **Facts and figures**
by Susan Jantzen

16 **Window shopping**

Cover photo credit: Mil Penner, Sounds of Kansas

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Loved into faith

by Anna K. Juhnke

Anna Kreider Juhnke recently retired as professor of English at Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) She and her husband, Jim, have two adult children. They are members of Bethel College Mennonite Church.

When Gui-yun (Gwynn) Zhou came to the United States five years ago she was, she says, "a very strong atheist," educated under Chinese communism.

Gwynn grew up in a poor farm family in China and attended a nursing high school. She got the highest score in an English course for doctors and nurses taught by Erica Janzen, a Mennonite nursing professor serving under China Educational Exchange (CEE). After Erica returned to teach at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., she sponsored Gwynn and another Chinese nurse to study at Bethel.

Although Gwynn was impressed by the warmth and caring of the Mennonite community, "I couldn't understand how these highly educated people could believe in God." She had long discussions about Christian faith with Tina Block Ediger, "Grandpa" Winfield Fretz, Bethel professor Patty Shelly and others.

After graduation, Gwynn left for a job in Baltimore with two important gifts: a Bible and *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, marked at her favorite hymn, "Be thou my vision." Knowing that Mennonites would help her, she arrived at the North Baltimore Mennonite Church, with all her possessions still packed in her car. Bob and Ruby Lehman took Gwynn into their home until she found an apartment. Their small urban church surrounded Gwynn with care, furnishing her apartment and helping her find a better job. As she participated in the church and in a small group, Gwynn decided to commit her life to God in Christ. At her baptism on March 3, Gwynn stated, "Today I become a true follower of Christ, following your teaching and ministry and joining your loving Christian family."

The love and living examples of many Christians, from CEE to Bethel College, to North Baltimore Mennonite Church, taught the truth of faith to Gwynn. Her intellect finally assented: "Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart."

Gui-Yun Zhou (Gwynn) and Patty Shelly, after Gwynn's baptism.

Managing ...ourselves

by Anette Eisenbeis

Stewardship is not an easy concept for present-day North Americans. We hear about it in relation to our responsibility to God and the church, but where in day-to-day experience do we encounter a similar idea? Who in our society is expected to act as a steward—a teenager driving his parents' car? The family genealogist handling her family's stories and dates? A person who rents a home or fields or equipment? I recall my father teaching us that if we use something that belongs to someone else we are to be twice as careful as if it were our own.

Our own? "Yes, of course," we respond. Our culture ensures personal rights to property and the freedom to use or misuse it. It is the individual's prerogative—a very useful plan. But do society's principles apply to us as God's stewards?

The stewards in Jesus' parables had a function that was commonly understood by his listeners. It's hard for us to imagine the servant-master relationship as acceptable and beneficial. It is even harder to visualize a master giving considerable wealth into the care of servants. What became of those assets depended entirely upon the loyalty of the servant to the master and to that master's goals.

As Mennonites we declare ourselves to be servants of God, the Master who gives good things to us. We can blithely calculate possibilities for further gain, but we also need to be conscious of the day of reckoning Jesus prophesied. We must know our Master well enough to know his expectations. We must also recognize that our culture does not necessarily look upon loyalty to an unseen master as desirable or even plausible. In fact, everything in the world around us seems to encourage self-gratification.

Let's look at some of the implications of taking seriously our role as servants who are loyal to the Master.

First, it means careful balancing of the resources God places at our disposal. If I choose to save water, soap and electricity by doing my laundry in much the same manner as my mother did, I know that I will spend more time and physical energy than my contemporaries, especially if I try to avoid using the dryer. Is it good stewardship of my time to cook and bake from scratch? Or to mend my farmer husband's work clothes? (I'm now darning socks with embroidery floss as darning cotton seems to be an outmoded commodity!) Choices must be made by each individual considering her health, calling, earlier experiences and her current situation. Fourteen years overseas in close contact with poverty helped shape my choices.

On this stewardship adventure I should pay much less attention to what most people happen to be doing and more attention to how I can best use resources God makes available to me. This "best use" includes the welfare of my global neighbors and what I see as God's purposes in the world.

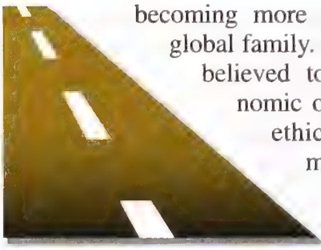
Second, it is sometimes lonely. Choosing to live in nonconformity to prevailing patterns gives opportunity to surprise and even shock people, if that's something you enjoy. But more often it means feeling on the fringes or anxious about one's credibility. I usually keep quiet when a conversation turns to television viewing. But if I am asked whether I saw a program, I explain that we don't have TV. This usually results in a surprised look and silence. If I then try to explain that we don't miss it and really don't have time for it anyway, I get—more silence.

A third factor involved in loyal servanthood is looking beyond the obvious. For a farmer there are advantages to a system that thwarts the growth of weeds and the infestation of pests by simply covering the field with poisons. It's relatively easy, fast and effective. What it does to the farmer's health, to the beneficial organisms in the soil, to wildlife and to the water supply are often less noticeable—at least for some time. Another example is electricity, an "obviously" clean, effective, dependable and convenient source of power. We rarely think of any cost beyond the electric bill. But I understand that about half of the power in our area is generated by burning coal. That process, though hundreds of miles from here, costs something in terms of contamination of the atmosphere. I learned as a young child to use water carefully since I saw every bucketful carried into the house. Now the endless stream of water, hot or cold, available with a flick of the wrist, gives the false impression that the supply is endless.

Wendell Wiebe-Powell comments: "We are doing a great deal to develop and manage our existence, yet we rarely take into account what we are undoing in the process. Modern science's ability to manipulate nature has at the same time unleashed forces that are all the more out of our control" ("Reflections on the Creation Summit: Shaping an Anabaptist Theology for Living," 1995). He suggests, and I agree, that an appropriate concept of stewardship is the managing of ourselves toward harmony with God's reign and the complex design of nature.

Anette Eisenbeis and her husband, Larry, live on a farm in southeast South Dakota. They are members of Salem-Zion Mennonite Church near Freeman. They have four adult children and nine grandchildren. Anette completed a long term as Publications Committee chair in 1995.

A stewardship journey: Signs along the way



by **Jocele Meyer**

When I drive country roads or city streets teeming with traffic, often the signs are nearly hidden. In retrospect the signs pointing to more responsible stewardship in my life are plainer now than when I first saw them.

Sign #1: Live within your income. Budget your time and money. These rules, learned in college home management courses, were the first sign on my adult stewardship journey. My husband, Art, and I attempted to live by these principles. I opted to stay at home as the primary child-care giver. It was a challenge to manage on a public school teacher's salary. When the children were in school, I began part-time teaching which still allowed time for church and community volunteer tasks.

Sign #2: In the '60s and '70s our children began to talk about the "simple life." We listened and changed some of our traditional ways by driving a smaller car, using more public transportation, lowering the thermostat and reorganizing our wardrobes. The energy crisis at that time reminded us that the world's resources were limited. We were becoming more aware of how much we really had.

Sign #3: "More-with-less" came and we were encouraged to live simply so that others might simply live. We were becoming more aware of the global family. What I earlier believed to be an economic option became ethically and morally right. During this time a number of books stressed the back-to-the-land movement and voluntary simplicity. Ron Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* pointed out the disparity between the haves and have-nots and also suggested a graduated tithe which introduced us to another way to share our resources.

Sign #4: Our congregation in Cleveland was involved in the Mennonite Church's planned stewardship program. We worked together to plan programs and goals for the church year. Individually we made pledges of money and our gifts. We became more aware that we were caretakers of all God's resources.

Sign #5: A trip to India when I was a delegate to the first All Mennonite Women's Conference convinced us to take early retirement from teaching to volunteer with MCC. After a year in Grenada, West Indies, we worked in MCC's global education office dealing with hunger, poverty and environmental issues. My training in home economics and Art's in natural science along with our education backgrounds were invaluable in this work as we discussed with congregations our part in contributing to the injustices in our world and appropriate responses for Christians.

Sign #6: While living in greater Cleveland we purchased land in the country. We valued our farm backgrounds and that opportunity to be in touch with the land. We wanted land in the country so that we and our urban friends would have a place to study nature and to be renewed. We had hoped that it would be a place to read, write and rock (in a rocking chair). "The farm," as it was fondly named, had been strip-mined for coal before miners were required to reclaim the barren high walls and spoils. We were challenged to work at reclamation of this degraded land.

On the acres that had not been mined we gardened and tended a fruit orchard. The taste of fresh fruit and vegetables soon encouraged us to grow enough for our table and to share with friends and relatives. There is space for a few steers and chickens. Wooded areas provide firewood and a home for wild turkeys, deer, grouse and a variety of birds.

One step at a time is the way I often describe living in this spot. Finding the land at a price we could afford, then reclaiming it and becoming involved in a variety of related projects have evolved in the past 20 years. In 1985 Art and I moved to a new energy-efficient house on the farm. I continue to reside here since Art's death in 1991.

When we bought 80 run-down acres, we did not expect to plant thousands of trees, raise numerous fruits and vegetables, be part of a community of intentional neighbors, or do the myriad activities that fill my and my family's days. I do read and write here but there is little time for rocking. There is time to walk, to sit and to meditate. Contacts with visitors who inquire about an alternate way of approaching care for creation continue to inspire me. I learn from others who want to be God's stewards in all of life.

Living here I am constantly reminded I am a steward of all that God has created. God pronounced the creation good. It is wrong to misuse any part of God's creation. "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it." Psalm 24:1 speaks to my care for the earth, the air, the water and humankind. My aim has been to serve God daily.

Sign #7: Another sign along the road we travel is the **stop sign.** God ended creation with the sixth day. On the seventh day God realized that the work of creation was done, and God rested. God blessed and hallowed that day (Genesis 2:2-3). I liken the stop sign to the Sabbath. We need regular sabbaticals from our routines so that we can regain perspective and make time for God, our Creator.

Although I know that in today's business-oriented world it is not always possible, I have dreamed about all people being able to take sabbaticals from their jobs. This would enable them to do volunteer work with church agencies or do other creative tasks. Each of us can still observe mini-sabbaticals. Perhaps each day a few minutes or more can be set aside as we work with a hobby, take a short walk, read a favorite book, play the piano or sit quietly. We can all observe Sunday in ways that are re-creative. We have been given a day that gives us a change of pace.

I am learning on my journey to define the role of a steward as that of a caretaker. I am simply caring for all that God has given me while here on the earth God has created.

Jocele Meyer is now retired from Mennonite Central Committee and lives on "the farm" near Fresno, Ohio. She continues to study, write and speak about care for all of God's creation. Jocele is co-chair of the Mennonite Environmental Task Force. She is also the mother of three and grandmother of eight.

RESOURCES for you

A Workbook of Biblical Stewardship by Richard E. Rusbuldt. (Eerdmans, 1994, paperback, $10.00 U.S.) This nine-chapter study on biblical stewardship can be used in a Sunday school or small-group setting. Rusbuldt's stimulating questions and concepts of stewardship that include all aspects of God's creation will facilitate discussion and motivation for change.

An Ordinary Woman's Extraordinary Faith by Patricia St. John. (Harold Shaw, 1993, paperback, $11.99 U.S.) The author writes about her varied experiences as war-time nurse, lone missionary in a Muslim community, relief worker and lover of children. Her story proves that an everyday faith can make the difference between an ordinary or extraordinary life.

Firstfruits Living: Giving God our Best by Lynn A. Miller. (Herald Press, 1991, paperback, $5.95 U.S.) Combining story with Bible study, Miller invites us to examine the quality of our response to God. "The church will be blessed by this book" states James M. Lapp, former general secretary of the Mennonite Church.

Jesus CEO, Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership by Laurie Beth Jones. (Hyperion, 1995, hardcover, $16.95 U.S.) Jones notes that Jesus' approach to his "staff" ran counter to most management styles used today. Following the example of Jesus, Jones details a simple, profound and often humorous approach to motivating and managing others. This book is written in the belief that the work place is indeed holy and fertile ground.

Money Doesn't Grow on Trees: A parent's guide to raising financially responsible children by Neale S. Godfrey and Carolina Edwards. (Simon & Schuster, 1994, paperback, $11.00 U.S.) Designed to help parents explain the basics of money management to kids age 3 up through college. Can help parents give their children the gift of self-reliance.

We Had Everything But Money: Priceless memories of the Great Depression. (Reminisce Books, 1992, hardcover, $16.95 U.S.) Love and sharing saw America's families through the Depression. These are the memories of those who found that while tough times never last, tough people do.

All books available through Faith & Life Bookstore: 1-800-743-2484.

Journey thoughts

by Bek Linsenmeyer

When we lived in Sierra Leone, West Africa, we were surprised and puzzled by the large roadside sign that said, "You have been warned!" About what? Rounding the curve we came to a one-lane bridge and understood the warning. Our decision to devote this issue of *Window* to stewardship was not made without considering other warnings: People do not want to hear about stewardship. They do not want to hear about how to give their money.

Good, this is not about your money. It is about how committed women are living out their understanding of stewardship. It is a continuation of our plan to lift out articles from the Confession of Faith to explore this year. Stewardship, according to Article 21 in the Confession of Faith, is about our Anabaptist belief "that everything belongs to God, who calls us as the church to live as faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us." In the New Testament household the steward was entrusted with the landlord's assets. In the same way, the head of our household entrusts us with many gifts. If we truly believe that it all belongs to God, how are we doing with the use of those gifts? In preparing for this issue I was challenged about resource use in a new way as I read about people saying they don't have time to exercise, but average three hours of TV-watching per day. We tend to find the time for the things most important to us. Do my activities reflect my stated priorities?

Our writers challenged me to reassess my use of time and resources entrusted to me. I hope their words will cause me to change my life. I frequently tell our writers that we want to challenge, inspire and encourage women through *Window*. I challenge you to examine whether you truly believe the words of our Confession of Faith: "We believe that everything belongs to God ... we are called to be stewards in the household of God; set apart for the service of God." I hope you will be inspired to pursue the best use of what God has entrusted to you. And finally, I pray that you will be encouraged in the stewardship of your life as you read how other women are also living out, day by day, their call.

Bek Linsenmeyer, WM editor, lives outside of Inman, Kan., and works one-third time for WM. She and her husband, Dean, have two children. They are members of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church where Dean is pastor.

Slave or servant, sister or friend?

an interview with Lois Barrett by Bek Linsenmeyer

Lois Barrett is executive secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries. Lois and her husband, Thomas Mierau, live in Wichita and are members of the Church of the Servant where Lois was pastor until June of 1992. They have three children.

***Window* is focusing on the Confession of Faith this year. What significance does the Confession of Faith have for women?**

It should have the same relevance for women as for men. It's a guideline for interpreting Scripture, for belief and practice, not only to think right but to do right. It's a foundation for unity, an outline for new church members, a resource for faith conversations with non-Christians.

What was women's role in shaping the Confession?

About one-third of the committee members were women. I played two roles: I was a General Conference representative and I did some writing. It was a privilege and a changing experience for me. I am much more convinced now that Mennonites have a different understanding of the church than the dominant culture has. The dominant culture sees the pastor as the church. The pastor is the chaplain to society. Or, the church is a spiritual filling station and the members are consumers. Or, the church is one more voluntary association.

I have a deepened agreement with our Anabaptist conviction that the church is the body of Christ in the world. That it is a preview of the reign of God which we are to proclaim. Only this second model says that everybody has some gift for ministry.

The commentary on this article uses the term "stewardship of the Gospel." What does this mean for us?

In the New Testament the actual word used is entrusted. 2 Corinthians 5 uses "entrusted" with the message of reconciliation. It is the same principle as stewardship of dollars or possessions.

The notion of stewardship is important in that it is related to the household. In the first century all types of people were involved in the same economic unit. The steward was the head servant in charge of helping the unit produce. In the household of God, as well as using slave and servant language, adoption and friend language are also included. Paul doesn't mind using the image of being a slave to Christ, but that image and the strong communal image go against the autonomy in our culture.

Was the widow who gave all that she had a good steward?

(Pause.) Yes. Our basic attitude about stewardship has to be the same as our attitude towards spirituality. We won't get very far with stewardship of possessions if we don't have an attitude that everything is really God's—to put it all into God's hands, and to know that God will give back to us.

Is there anything else you want to mention?

Continued on page 14

WM funds support the visionary work of the Commission on Home Ministries. This year your gifts will go to CHM's Anabaptist Biblical Institute.

That our work and worship may be one

an interview with Norma Johnson by Bek Linsenmeyer

Herald Press is publisher of the Confession of Faith. I understand Faith & Life Press also has plans using the Confession.

COE is considering two pieces. A development group met in May which will be working on a youth catechism based on the Confession. The writer is Ann Weber Becker, who served on the Confession committee and who has done youth work. It will be a resource guide for adults who teach catechism, with ideas for how to make use of the Confession.

The other possibility is to develop an adult elective using the Confession. It would be a leader's guide or methods piece for question and discussion techniques.

The commentary of the Confession uses the term "stewardship of the gospel," what does that mean for a publisher?

One phrase often used after receiving the offering in our church is "that our work and worship may be one." It is a holistic way of seeing life. I think of examples from our publishing that illustrate taking this seriously. *Jubilee* has presented the gospel in refreshing ways. The "I wonder" questions have prompted some thoughtful responses from children but some adults are critical of the approach. An *Adult Bible Study Guide* lesson view of Genesis didn't fit tradition. This coming from a different angle pushes people in their comfort zones. We want what we write to connect with living out Scripture. We are looking for ways to do that as we develop resources. Youth Bible studies intentionally use a life sketch, then go into the Bible text, then back to life. We are trying to connect daily life experience of youth with the Bible passage.

Norma Johnson is executive secretary for the Commission on Education. Norma lives in Newton and is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church. In her article Norma mentions experience as an educator. She taught in Kenya three years and six years in Botswana with Mennonite Central Committee.

What has God entrusted to you?

I see connections about things I've been entrusted with—the gifts I've been given and how I make use of them. This for me is living out stewardship. There's also a sense of "to what do I feel called?" Part of being called means how gifts match the task. As I was invited to consider my current position I looked back and I saw how my teaching school, my inter-Mennonite work and my seminary studies prepared me. Recognizing God's leading helps remove anxiety for the future.

One of the privileges of my job is being instrumental in people's journeys. It is a gift when people share their stories and COE's contact was important in their journeys.

The Commission on Education is involved in writing and producing Confession of Faith material. WM funds support COE in this work.

Good things on the east side

by Jeannie Zehr, secretary of mission communications, COM

"A very sad note was when my husband left me in 1988. It has been difficult to raise and discipline my children. (Omar is now 14 years old and Nancy is 10.) In 1989 I entered the United States illegally to work there out of economic necessity. I spent three years in California. I came back to Mexico because my children were getting older and needed me," says Lety Cortez in sharing her story.

Leticia "Lety" Cortez, missionary in training, in Mexico City.

During this rough time in 1988, Leticia Cortez visited a nearby Pentecostal church looking for help. There she gave her life to Christ. Shortly after that Jorge Rodriguez (now director of the Anabaptist mission outreach in Mexico City), Carlos Escobar (now a mission worker teammate of Lety's) and Sophia Marcial, a Mennonite woman, visited in Lety's home. Soon Lety was part of their Mennonite congregation. One of her greatest joys was when her mother and five sisters also accepted Christ.

Almost from the time Lety accepted Christ she felt the desire to serve. She knew she wanted to be a Sunday school teacher. While in California, she participated in a large congregation that was sending missionaries to Mexico City. Lety began asking the Lord if she could be a missionary.

Back in Mexico City, the opportunity to learn as a missionary-in-training with the Committee for Anabaptist Mission in Mexico City (CUMA), was an easy decision. She became part of the CUMA team working in her home territory, Palabra de Gozo. She has almost completed her first year of studies at the Anabaptist Biblical Institute with two more years to go. It's a challenge to balance her time between studies, ministry and family. Lety may be a missionary-in-training, but she already works almost full-time in ministry. She leads two growth groups and helps with a third group. And yes, she teaches Sunday school, fulfilling that early dream. She personally disciples six to eight women, is involved in visitation in the Palabra area and is helping the team begin work in the Lomas de San Isidro area.

She'd like to see a youth group in the Palabra area to minister to her brother and son. Her brother has been a drug addict since he was 10 years old. Now he is in his early 20s and his wife and two young children also suffer. Single mothers struggle to find employment, and to know where to leave their children when they work. Lety would like to find ways to meet those needs. She sees the enormous needs around her, and could be depressed and discouraged. Instead she works with God to make good things happen in the lives of people on the east side of Mexico City.

Women in Mission dollars go toward the Commission on Overseas Mission contribution for CUMA work. Lety's salary is covered by contributions to CUMA.

WM/WMSC release new study guide

Working together, the joint WM/WMSC Publications Committee has produced a new Bible study guide called *Sent into God's World.* The author is Helen Dueck, a General Conference mission worker who has served in Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil and Bolivia. More recently Helen has used her gifts of teaching in the area of New Testament and Christian education on a short-term assignment in Mexico. She and her husband, Henry, were based in Cuauhtemoc and also went out to the Steinreich Bible School.

Helen Dueck

In June, WM and WMSC groups will each receive three copies of *Sent into God's World.*

This is the seventh annual joint publication of Women in Mission and Women's Missionary and Service Commission.

The new booklet contains inspirational, easy-to-use Bible lessons and helpful program resources. It is the second of a two-part series of program materials on the theme "Household of God." The first part, *Called into God's Family*, appeared last year.

The Household of God series provides sound biblical teaching on the subject of the people of God as a family in mission. Last year's study told how the community of faith—the household of God—includes people of all races, nations and languages. This community is not called into being for its own sake, but exists for mission.

This year's Bible study develops that idea with teaching from the Book of Acts and the experiences of Mennonite mission workers. The desire of the writer of Acts was to awaken faith in readers through sharing the story of the triumphant progress of the good news through the power of the Spirit. This Spirit was apparent in the lives of those in the early church. Helen Dueck writes, "How I long that the women who will read these pages will receive new motivation to participate in the great work of missions by praying, going or supporting those who can go."

The material in the study guide is suitable for use by a variety of individuals and groups. It also includes adaptable program helps for Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day, a reading list and other resources. Copies can be ordered for group or personal use at a cost of $4 U.S./$5 Cdn. You may order copies from Women in Mission, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347; (316) 283-5100.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator, lives in Newton and works one-half time for WM. She and her husband, Jim, have two sons in grade school. They are members of New Creation Fellowship.

Mennonite World Conference, Calcutta

Plans were made at our March WM Advisory Council meetings for me to represent Women in Mission at Mennonite World Conference in Calcutta, India, next January. It is significant for me to travel to the country where my husband, Jim, was born and raised, and to be hosted by the Christian body in which his parents invested so many years of their life. Through the years I have also come to know some members of the Mennonite church in India. Just as Jim grew up, so has the Mennonite church of India matured. No longer new Christians, Mennonites of India have developed their own character, leaders and church outreach. Our call now as North American sisters and brothers is to allow ourselves to be partners and servants with the Mennonites of India. I look forward to sharing the World Conference with you by story and through pictures upon our return.

Women's groups have value

We know that many women find their lives too full with other relationships and commitments to be a part of a women's group at church. But for many the women's group is a sustaining source of friendship and encouragement for Christian commitment. At a recent women's conference in Alberta, I heard, "WM is a lifeline to my faith. I can be myself and be accepted by a group that really cares." Thanks be to God!

Slave or servant, sister or friend?

continued from page 10

The other thing we don't want to talk about today is the end times. The peace and justice God has promised in the age to come is what those in the church should be trying to live out now. Our call to mutual aid, economic justice and generous giving is part of the vision of what God's future is like. The church is to show now what God's future will be like.

Facts & figures

Our Women in Mission (WM) and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) **integration process** continues. A proposal will be brought to both executive committees next October and presented to you as women's groups in the spring of 1997. Whatever action is suggested will be for the binational level only. Your district or province remains free to decide integration questions on your own timetable.

WM/WMSC integration committee: front row (L to R) Joy Hess, Marian Hostetler; back row (L to R) Susan Jantzen, Helga Froese, Phyllis Schultz, Rose Covington.

We came with an agenda
God has a master agenda for us.
We came with questions
God provides answers for those who ask.
We came humbly and the message comes back,
"Well done, good and faithful servant."
And for this we thank and praise you, our God and father.
—Helga Froese

During times of change it is tempting to withdraw support. **WM desires to enter integration with a strong financial balance.** We respectfully request that your women's group maintain its current level of giving to General Conference Women in Mission through the summer of 1997. (Historically this has been $27.00 U.S./$33.00 Cdn. per woman.) Undesignated gifts are welcome so that all our commitments can be honored. We appreciate your support at this important and promising time of change. Thank you!

Thank you for returning your **ballots** sent to you in March. The results will be printed in our fall issue of *Window*.

Window shopping

At a missions fair or other special activity at your church, why not charge admission to the activity in Campbell's soup labels, which could go to Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.?

Send us your good ideas to share with readers. Send them to WM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Is your church involved in the Mission Partners Program? Have a birthday party for your mission workers' child (or children). Advertise the child's age and birthday in the invitation. At the party have church children bring gifts to wrap as part of the entertainment. Send gifts and party pictures to the birthday girl or boy.

At district retreats consider honoring a woman from each church across the district. It could be a wonderful way to celebrate how God has used women to further the work of the church. Her role is not as important as her dedication and commitment to God and community and church.

World Community Day, Friday, Nov. 1, 1996, is an annual event of Church Women United that brings together women in a worship experience focusing on issues of justice and peace. Rev. Marie Fortune, founder and executive director, and Rev. Thelma B. Burgonio-Watson, staff, for the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, Seattle, co-wrote this year's service entitled, "*Women and Violence and the Church*."

The writers call on us as Christians to work with our churches to prevent violence and give help and understanding to women who have been victims of violence.

Join in this year's World Community Day celebration in your community. For more information write or call Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115; 1-800-298-5551.

Women and Violence and The Church

WORLD COMMUNITY DAY
November 1, 1996

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

News

Inside the news

Apprehension and hope in Haiti / p. 14

MCC work changes in Haiti / p. 15

Damascus Road works to dismantle racism / p. 16

Hebron CPTers arrested, released / p. 16

A cup of water in the name of Christ / p. 17

Baghdad journal / p. 18

Some sanctions are lifted in Iraq / p. 19

AIDS exacts toll in Swaziland

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—As a Mennonite Central Committee public health nurse in rural Swaziland, Patricia Amroski observed the toll AIDS is exacting in that tiny Southern African country. In her work with home-based health care for people with AIDS, Amroski saw more than 50 AIDS patients in 1995; most died within that year. A recent study indicates 22 percent of Swazis ages 15 to 50 carry the virus that causes AIDS.

Amroski, of Laconia, N.H., recently completed her three-year MCC assignment in Swaziland.

Amroski believes future generations of Swazis must make lifestyle changes to lessen their vulnerability to the deadly disease. Advocating lifestyle changes led Amroski into the murky area of promoting cultural change. But, says Amroski, change is necessary; the status quo will prove "catastrophic." As part of her health education work, Amroski carried a message of sexual responsibility and AIDS awareness to 14 schools.

"Everyone has heard the word 'AIDS,' but Swazi youth have little accurate information about how it is spread," says Amroski. In Swazi culture, talk about sex is taboo. Traditionally grandmothers informed children about sex. Now many Swazis have moved away from family homesteads to find jobs in cities, and that tradition has broken down. "I expected to meet a lot of resistance, but teachers and students were surprisingly enthusiastic," says Amroski, herself a mother and grandmother. "Some teachers, however, became uncomfortable when I got into the nitty gritty."

One teacher expressed concern that talking about sex would encourage youth to try it. Amroski says many primary school children, who could be up to age 17, already engage in sex. Most Swazi churches preach abstinence outside of marriage and that Christians don't get AIDS. But, says Amroski, "what children are taught doesn't always match what they see." In northern Swaziland, where Amroski lived, about half the children are born out of wedlock. "I told students the body is a wonderful gift from God to them and they are responsible to care for this gift," Amroski says.

While stressing abstinence, she also provided information on disease prevention. Amroski began her educational efforts with information about the physical changes adolescents experience. She had discovered that school textbooks included diagrams of the reproductive systems of goats and cows but not of humans. One 14-year-old student did not know how she had gotten pregnant.

When Amroski broached the subject of "protecting" oneself from disease,

Patricia Amroski

Sexual responsibility: *Mennonite Central Committee nurse Patricia Amroski taught sexual responsibility and AIDS awareness classes at 14 schools in Swaziland. The headmistress and students at one of the schools are shown here.*

Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church celebrated its 60th anniversary May 26 with a church service and storytelling.

• • •

Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church celebrated its 190th anniversary June 8 and 9. The Sunday morning worship service was in a 1940s style.

• • •

"Responding to Clergy Misconduct: Investigation Teams and Overall Intervention Management" is a training conference scheduled for Sept. 5-7 at Des Moines (Iowa) Mennonite Church. Trainers are Chilton Knudsen, pastoral care officer for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago; Dale Stoltzfus, conference minister for Allegheny Conference; David Brubaker, Conflict Management Services, and John Esau, director of Ministerial Leadership Services. To register contact Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245; (219) 294-7523; fax (219) 293-1892.

Three congregations joined the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada at its annual sessions held April 12-13 in Kitchener, Ont. Joining the conference were Grace Lao Mennonite Church, St. Jacobs, Ont.; Taiwan Revival Christian Mennonite Church, North York, Ont., and River of Life Fellowship. Delegates at the conference approved a budget of $1,496,205 Cdn., down from $1,513,187 last year.

• • •

Sent into God's World **by Helen Dueck is a new Bible study guide produced by Women in Mission and Women's Missionary and Service Commission. Available for $4 U.S. ($5 Cdn.) from Women in Mission, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, or Women's Missionary & Service Commission, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46515-3243, (219) 294-7131.**

• • •

The National Council of Churches and the Christian Coalition are working together to stop the spread of legal gambling in the United States, reports ***Christian Century*****. In 1992, $329 billion U.S. was wagered. The two groups hope to form a commission to investigate the economic impact of gambling and gambling's ties to organized crime. (*Mennonite Reporter*)**

• • •

The Ku Klux Klan doesn't like the Amish. The Elkhart (Ind.) ***Truth*** **reports that Klan members rallied April 27 in LaGrange, Ind., where speakers criticized the Amish, calling them freeloaders. Virgil Tiz, KKK Grand Dragon of Ohio, lambasted the Amish for not paying taxes and not "defending the country." About 100 Klan supporters attended the rally, along with 200 anti-Klan demonstrators and 220 police officers. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)**

many students found it difficult to grasp. "Swazis accept what comes along in life, they don't try to change it," says Amroski. Although the Swazi language has a word for "germ," many rural people believe spirits cause illness, and that nothing can be done about it.

As a woman and an outsider, Amroski didn't feel she could address the issue of male promiscuity, which she sees as the root cause of the rapid spread of AIDS in Swaziland, a traditionally polygamous society. "Things won't change until men change because the culture allows men to have many sex partners," says Amroski. "But I think in the future the young men in my classes will be more open to discussing sexual responsibility than their fathers and grandfathers are." Amroski also encouraged mothers to talk with their sons.

> ***"If only a few students begin to see they have some ... control over what happens to them, I'll consider that success."***
>
> **Patricia Amroski**

To women, Amroski stressed that they "don't have to have sex," and can choose to say no to men. One teenager responded that if she refused to have sex with her boyfriend he would beat her. Even for women who don't feel powerless, the desire to have children is strong. In Swazi culture children are welcome, and women often define themselves through their ability to bear children.

Amroski has modest expectations about her efforts. "If only a few students begin to question the status quo, to see they have some sexual responsibility and some control over what happens to them, I'll consider that success." Amroski finds hope in a recent statement by the Swaziland Council of Churches. "The Council of Churches has said culture is man-made, not God-given; that culture is meant to benefit the members of society so when it is instead detrimental, society must question why certain things are done." Amroski also finds hope in the Swazi nurses who are continuing the work she started. "As a mature, foreign woman I was able to say things a Swazi woman couldn't say," says Amroski.

But now that she has broken ground and as the AIDS epidemic worsens, people have become more open in talking about AIDS. One tough issue Swazi nurses will face is the tradition that widows be taken as wives by other male family members, even if the deceased husband had AIDS. If women reveal they carry the virus that causes AIDS they may be rejected and left without livelihood, yet if they don't reveal this information the disease could ravage the family. Some nurses are themselves second wives.

Swaziland has been faced with the spread of AIDS later than some other African nations. In Uganda and in Zambia, behavior has changed as a result of education, and the impact of the disease and rate of new infections has slowed. *Pearl Sensenig*

Apprehension and hope co-exist in Haiti

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Contradictions. That word sums up Haiti today, said Mennonite Central Committee Haiti director Daniel Wiens in a recent phone interview.

Free elections have broken a cycle of coups and military violence, but Haitians are frustrated with the slow pace of government reform. In Port-au-Prince, the capital, new commercial and residential building is booming. Yet unemployment is high, and Haiti still has little production capacity or infrastructure. The country seems to teeter on the edge of financial collapse. International action led to civilian government, but the withdrawal of United Nations troops in June leaves fear and uncertainty.

Poor people's hopes for change with the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide have been frustrated, Wiens said. People are often hungry and they lack water and electricity.

Few Haitians fear a return to military rule, says Wiens. But increasing violence by "zenglendos," armed young men who roam the country, is a problem. In the absence of the previous military authoritarianism, banditry has increased. The Canadian and French governments are helping Haiti develop a new civilian police force,

Emily Will (MCC)

Pressing concern: *A man and his son extract juice from raw sugar cane, to be used to sweeten the family's coffee. The press is an example of homemade technology used in the Bwadlorens area of northeast Haiti. It is an apt symbol of the hard work and ingenuity Haitians have had to employ to "press" a little sweetness into their lives during decades of oppression and poverty.*

but youth and inexperience—many police are in their early 20s—have so far limited its effectiveness.

The 2,000 remaining United Nations troops deter the return of military rule but seldom intervene in civilian policing, only occasionally stepping in to restrain large street disturbances. Large numbers of guns are still hidden in the country. Haiti's sense of calm is superficial, a Haitian friend told Wiens; underneath little has changed. Haitians also continue to debate the merits of privatization, required by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Currently, Haitian ports, telephone and electric service are nationalized. Former president Aristide was confronted with this issue but was unable to resolve it before his term ended earlier this year. New president Rene Preval seems to support privatization. On the street and on radio talk shows, privatization is a hot topic, with Haitians split over how best to improve efficiency and limit corruption.

In a time of rumor and uncertainty, what is accurate: impending disaster or positive change, return to violence or evolving civil society? "Haiti has borne the brunt of negative forces throughout its history," Wiens says. "I believe [Haitians] can pull themselves out given the chance."

MCC work changes in new Haitian political order

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Commitee work in Haiti, under civilian government for the first time, is changing, reports Dan Wiens, MCC Haiti director.

Previously MCC ran its own agriculture and health programs, because Haitians were not allowed to form their own organizations. After the coup that ousted former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, group meetings were forbidden.

When Aristide returned to power, he not only allowed but even encouraged grass-roots organizations to develop and grow. Now Haitian organizations are springing up throughout the country, and MCC is helping church and other organizations carry out agendas they set themselves.

Many groups are so new, however, Wiens says, that MCC workers may need to help nurture them. "We can't walk alongside Haitian organizations yet because they haven't had enough time or experience to even find their feet. So now we're working with them to help them find their own feet and walk. After that we can step back and accompany these organizations as MCC workers do in other parts of the world," Wiens says.

MCC currently has 17 workers in Haiti. In Port-au-Prince, five serve in administration, social services and peace issues with an ecumenical church center. MCC workers serve with a Haitian organization that is creating a center for 10- to 12-year-old girls living on the street.

In the countryside, 12 MCC workers do agriculture and primary health-care work. MCC also helps mediate on land issues in the Artibonite Valley, where Haitian church groups are working to resolve in a nonviolent way competing land claims. *Ardell Stauffer*

A Tokyo company recently launched a new line of sandals, handbags and accessories under the "A Bomb" label, reports *Chicago Reader*. When asked about the label's name, a company spokesperson said she thought "A Bomb" meant "cute." (*Salt of the Earth*)

• • •

Evangelist Billy Graham and his wife, Ruth, received the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal May 2. The medal is the highest honor Congress can give a citizen. The medal recognizes the Grahams for "outstanding and lasting contributions to morality, racial equality, family, philanthropy and religion."

• • •

Six young people in British Columbia are growing trees and self-esteem through a Mennonite Central Committee B.C. job-creation program. They will be planting 100,000 trees in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia, plus learning job skills, perseverance, determination and responsibility. The jobs program is supported by Tree Plan Canada and Youth Services Canada, with MCC B.C. coordinating the program. Participants in last year's program had an 80 percent success rate in finding employment.

• • •

Four San Francisco Bay-area American Baptist churches have been expelled from their regional jurisdiction because of their outreach to gay and lesbian people. On Jan. 6, delegates at a special meeting of American Baptist Churches of the West voted overwhelmingly to sever ties with the four congregations. All four belong to the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, a group of several dozen American Baptist congregations that have reached out to gay and lesbian people. It is unclear whether the congregations will be allowed to remain in the denomination without the approval of their regional jurisdiction. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Mennonites in Kidron, Ohio, have built the Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center, which highlights the culture of the Swiss Mennonites who migrated there in 1890 from Switzerland. Included in the exhibit are an 1830 dwelling, furniture, quilts, frakturs, clothing and artifacts. New to the exhibit this year are a school room, a church setting and a genealogy department complete with computerized database. For information, contact the Heritage Center at P.O. Box 234, Kidron, OH 44636-0234; (216) 857-9111.

• • •

Teams of Mennonite Brethren young people in Curitiba, Brazil, witnessed in front of dance halls and clubs during the annual Carnaval celebrations, Feb. 17-20. In previous years, youth leaders had organized retreats during the holiday to protect young people from the "rampant carnality." This year's witnessing gave the participants strength and determination in countering the culture with the message of Christ. Valdemar Kroker, who started the alternative program, is enthusiastic. "It turned out to be a successful experiment." (Mennonite Brethren Missions)

• • •

Amish people in Allen County, Ind., are planning to vote this November for the first time. As of early February, 98 Amish residents had registered to vote in the next election, and more were expected to register, reports the Berne (Ind.) *TriWeekly News*. About 800 Amish people are eligible to vote in the county. The Amish have historically not voted because of their desire to remain separate from the world and their conviction against passing judgment on people. "It's been a difficult decision for the Amish," says Robert Griggs, an Amish advocate in Allen County, "But they realize that they judge people every day when they decide whose store to go to." (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Damascus Road works to dismantle racism

Editor's note: *Teams from nine Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions met March 23-26 in Leavenworth, Kan., and May 20-24 in Chicago to work on long-term strategies for dismantling racism in their institutions. The 47 participants in this process, known as the Damascus Road, affirmed the following statement:*

- We agree with the 1989 Mennonite Church/General Conference Mennonite Church statement that "the foundation for our concerns is that we have become one in the blood of the crucified Christ (Ephesians 2:14) and our membership is to be drawn from every race and tribe and language and nation (Revelation 5:9-10)."
- We have begun to learn about the pervasive nature of racism in society at large and in our institutions.
- We understand that racism combines institutional power and personal prejudice.
- Racism is a diabolical evil.
- To dismantle racism we must change the way our institutions have protected the privileges and power of white people.
- We support the 1995 Hispanic Mennonite statement that calls for "transforming institutional structures, policies, and procedures to eliminate racism." Such transformation requires expanding basic understandings of mission and identity.
- Failure to dismantle racism not only robs congregations and institutions of a rich spectrum of gifts and cultures but diminishes the church's witness in the world and ultimately renders it impotent.
- We have experienced the richness of worship, work and building trust amid the ongoing struggle of coming to a common understanding of racism.

With renewed hope we call the church and our institutions to build upon the church's many gifts and resources to work aggressively at dismantling racism:

- by making anti-racism work a priority in our institutions' missions;
- by building on the work of each institution's anti-racism teams;
- by participating in and supporting the ongoing work of the Damascus Road teams.

The nine teams participating in the Damascus Road project are Eastern Mennonite University, General Conference Mennonite Church offices, Fairhaven Mennonite Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.), Goshen (Ind.) College, Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Mennonite Central Committee (binational), Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Western District Conference.

Hebron CPTers arrested, then released

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—On the evening of May 28, all four members of Christian Peacemaker Teams in Hebron were arrested without warning along with one other American peace worker and two Palestinians. They were subsequently released from Israeli prisons by June 1 on the condition that their mobility in the West Bank would be severely limited.

The team had been invited by a Palestinian friend to help prepare his wheat field for plowing. Israeli settlers had illegally planted olive tree saplings in the field, and not wishing to see them damaged, the group prepared to transplant them to the adjacent Susia settlement property. Settlers armed with Uzis arrived at the site, located about 30 minutes south of Hebron, and began harassing the CPTers. Team members were pushed, spit on, threatened and hit with stones.

Although the Palestinian legally owned the land and was therefore entitled to remove the trees, Israeli soldiers took the CPTers and their companions into custody, confiscated their passports and detained them for four hours until the police arrived after midnight. They were then taken to the Hebron police station, where they were kept on a flight of stairs, deprived of sleep and interrogated over the course of 15 hours. One CPTer and the two Palestinians were handcuffed and shackled for several hours.

Later the men, including CPTers Bob Naiman (Chicago), Randy Bond (Grand Rapids, Mich.), Tom Malthaner (Rochester, N.Y.) and two Palestinians, were transferred to the military prison of Aduraim near Dura, West Bank. The women, CPTer Wendy Lehman (Kidron, Ohio) and another American, were taken to Lachis Prison in

Ashkelon, Israel. While in prison, team members were not allowed to see their lawyer and were threatened with indefinite jail sentences. The two women were in a cell with three Israeli prisoners, who at one point wielded a knife and issued angry threats at them. Forty-eight hours later, Lehman was brought before a judge with no attorney present and no translation. She was charged not only with tree removal but with a list of other activities that CPT had been involved in over the past few months. Four days after their initial arrest, all team members and their companions were released.

CPTers report this experience as marked by unprecedented breaches of due process and view this crackdown as indicative of an atmosphere conducive to increasing settler violence and control in Palestine.

The last year has seen significant growth in support for CPT work from Palestinian Christians. CPT steering committee chair Cliff Kindy, a former member of the Hebron team, said, "CPT workers will seek the advice of Palestinian Christians along with the suggestions of supporting churches in North America on how to continue the ministry of peacemaking under new and possibly more dangerous conditions. The power of love and the miracle of nonviolence can be most powerfully revealed in circumstances like those that prevail now on the West Bank."

A cup of water in the name of Christ

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Making a big splash: *In Burkina Faso, John Scicchitano, Mennonite Central Committee appropriate technology promoter, and local blacksmiths have designed the Simplicity Plus pump, also called SIMPLUS, a new low-cost, deep-well PVC pump. The new pump may eventually replace thousands of broken well pumps in this arid country. Scicchitano sank the first SIMPLUS pump in November 1995 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's capital. Surrounded by a crowd of men, women and children, Scicchitano dismantled a broken pump and attached a SIMPLUS pump. With several strokes, water gushed out. The crowd was ecstatic. "A cup of water, in the name of Christ," shouted Scicchitano over the cheers of the crowd. "SIMPLUS pumps are made locally with available materials so people feel it's really their pump. Local technicians who can make the pumps will also be able to repair them. Further, SIMPLUS pumps are affordable," explains Scicchitano. The pump costs about $160 U.S. ($200 Cdn.). The pump design is a modification of the rower pump originally developed by George Klassen, an MCC volunteer in Bangladesh in the late 1970s. Burkinabe blacksmiths and technicians have formed an informal cooperative to sell and promote the pumps. The technicians are able to help the people of the region while earning extra income to support their families.*

The maker of *Showgirls*, a movie about Las Vegas strippers described by Toronto's *Globe and Mail* as "dull adolescent porn," confesses a deep interest in the life of Christ. Paul Verhoeven attends meetings of the controversial Jesus Seminar, a group of scholars studying the historical Jesus. Verhoeven says he hopes to make a movie about the life of Christ. (*The United Church Observer*)

• • •

No film is being made about the sex life of Christ. The rumor that such a film is being produced continues to surface. One rumor claims that "Modern People News" is planning to produce a film that portrays Jesus as a homosexual and that the part of Mary Magdalene will be played by a notorious French prostitute. Other false claims that still make the rounds are that the Federal Communications Commission is considering a petition to ban religious broadcasting, and that the president of Procter and Gamble appeared on the Phil Donahue show and admitted to being a satanist. (*Christian Leader*)

• • •

Recent monitoring by the American Family Association found that television violence is down by 30 percent compared with a period six months earlier, but the study also found that sex was up by 31 percent and profanity by 26 percent. The study of prime-time network programming was done Oct. 29 to Nov. 25, 1995. Monitoring showed that 94 percent of all prime-time programs contained violence, sex and/or profanity; 88 percent of all sex presented on the programs was depicted outside marriage. Fox led the networks with an average of violence, sex and profanity incidents at 17.57 per hour, followed by NBC at 13.90, CBS at 13.76 and ABC at 7.8. (*Christian Leader*)

Carnegie-Mellon University has received a $12.1 million award over five years from the National Science Foundation to establish a National Consortium for Research on Violence. The consortium will examine fundamental causes and consequences of violence. The university plans to assemble a team of 39 researchers from 24 research institutions in 11 states, Canada and four European countries. Also contributing to the project are the National Institute of Justice and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

On April 4, a girl with an evil spirit in her came to the Sewa Bhawan Hospital in Jagdeeshpur, India. The parents and the girl did not have much faith, even though they are Christians, reports Dr. Tushar Naik, hospital medical superintendent. The parents had tried all sorts of therapy by local quacks and magicians to help their daughter. When this did not succeed, they brought their child to the hospital. Naik could not find any physical disease, so he suggested "prayer therapy." "I went to her bed with a Bible in my hand," reports Naik. "She shouted, 'Get this man out of my sight! I do not want to see him!' She pointed at me and demanded to know, 'Why have you come to me? What harm have I done to you?' While shouting these things, she ran from one bed to another in the hospital." It took six people to catch her. "We then started praying to the Lord to take the evil spirit out of her body," says Naik. "We continued for 20 minutes. Gradually she became quiet. She said, 'I want to go back; leave me; leave me.'" Approximately 100 people witnessed the driving out of this evil spirit in the name of Christ. Among the people watching were about 60 patients and their relatives, who are not Christian. "Thanks and praise be to the Lord for his wonderful blessing," says Naik. The hospital was started by Mennonite missionaries in the 1920s.

Baghdad journal

Editor's note: *Mennonite Central Committee worker Paul Pereverzoff visited Iraq in February to help distribute MCC aid, including medicines and canned meat, and to assess needs in Iraq for the agency.*

Pereverzoff

Baghdad, Iraq (MCC)—Through the taxi window I see a tired-looking city. No obvious signs of the 1991 Persian Gulf War remain. If it involves cement or steel, the Iraqis have been able to redo it. But everything else looks old, grubby and gray. The newest car is six years old. Most are older. Between Baghdad city driving, total inaccessibility of spare parts and unskilled mechanics, every vehicle on the road could be retired tomorrow.

I ask taxi drivers what their other professions are. Invariably they smile and reveal they are engineers, bankers, stockbrokers and schoolteachers. One morning I am driven by a veterinary doctor, a full professor at Baghdad University, trying to earn a little bit of money before his first lecture at 10 a.m. All of these men, before the war and the embargo, had good, secure jobs. So much so that they could afford to own cars. Now those cars are providing these men and their families a way to stay alive.

Lunch with the Khourys: A well-to-do Christian family invites me for lunch. The head of the household, a widow, has a doctorate from a U.S. university and is a science professor.

After lunch the hostess tells me how bad things are. Often they have only enough food in the house for the day: they prepare and eat it, and then say a prayer that tomorrow they might also be able to buy food. As a professor, her monthly salary is probably about 5,000 Iraqi dinar. That would buy a couple kilos of rice and meat to feed a household with seven members for a month. Prior to the war and embargo, one Iraqi dinar was worth $3 U.S.; now $1 U.S. may fetch 3,000 Iraqi dinars.

Al-Rasheed Hotel: This five-star hotel, where CNN and other journalists camped out during the Gulf War, bears not a trace of missile attacks, although one missile crashed into the front lobby, killing the young woman on duty at the front desk.

What the hotel displays now is the damage caused by the continuing international economic embargo against Iraq. Tastefully arrayed in the various lobbies are the precious items from a thousand Iraqi households, all for sale on consignment. Family heirlooms, pieces of art, the 33-stone prayer beads fingered by Iraqi Christians and Muslims alike, violins, flutes, carpets and jewels.

Imagine the things of value in your home. What would you sell first if hard times came upon you? The VCR? Then the TV? Maybe you'd hang on to the radio for awhile just to get the news, but eventually that would have to be sold too. And if this process goes on for years, what's the last thing you would sell? Not necessarily the most cash-valuable things but gifts from your mother or from your grandfather. All these family treasures—the last precious bits of memory—are for sale at the al-Rasheed Hotel so families can raise money to buy food.

Tahrir (Independence) Square: Ironically, total dependence is displayed at Independence Square. Friday is the day when poorer Iraqis try to sell what is left of their possessions to passersby. The more valuable items were sold a long time ago.

Family treasures—the last precious bits of memory—are for sale at the al-Rasheed Hotel so families can raise money to buy food.

All that's left now are things of minor value—a broken VCR, disassembled to sell as parts; extra clothing; a handful of pens from the back of someone's desk drawer; hearing aids, eight or 10 of them in a glass case. A couple of children try to sell their video games. A war veteran, wearing his fatigue jacket, sits in his wheelchair, selling his household freezer. A gentleman sells his small shower-size gas water heater.

People are also selling what remains of their hobbies. Some display their stamp and coin collections. A young man sells his collection of opera recordings. He must be a music student, maybe even a critic. Among his collection are three different recordings of "Die Fledermaus" by Johann Strauss.

Kerada Neighborhood: We stroll

along the crowded sidewalks and stop at a gold shop. My Lebanese friend, who wants to buy some jewelry for his eldest daughter, asks if they have any rubies. The proprietor reaches under the counter for a box. It contains dozens and dozens of rubies. Rubies, not as tough as diamonds, bear scars of wearing. As I look at the stones, I see they were removed from larger pieces of jewelry that were probably melted down and sold by gram. I think of all the rings, bracelets and necklaces Iraqi women have had to sell to insure their families' survival.

I tell my Lebanese friend I feel guilty looking at the prizes for sale before me. He is from Beirut and explains to me, while counting out a huge stack of bank notes to purchase a pair of ruby earrings, that he and his family had to sell everything of value to survive the 15 years of civil war that racked Lebanon until 1990. I suppose, by regaining wealth he lost in strife, he is completing some bizarre cycle from wealth to poverty to wealth again. I don't judge him, but I don't buy anything myself, feeling I could be capitalizing on the misfortunes of others.

Greater than gold: After attending the Arabic-language Greek Orthodox church service, I dine with an Iraqi government economist and his two daughters. Although educated abroad, the economist remains a party man. But he is pragmatic and knows suffering. I tell him about the items I

Some sanctions are lifted in Iraq

Chicago (CPT)—A deal announced May 15 allows Iraq to sell $4 billion worth of oil in the next year. Christian churches contributed toward persuading United States and United Nations authorities that the embargo against Iraq, targeted primarily against Iraqi civilians, is unacceptable.

A May 21 New York *Times* editorial, "A Good Oil Deal with Iraq," lauds the U.N. "food for oil" deal as the result of "tough-minded American bargaining ... and six years of steadfastness by the United Nations." The editorial does not mention the 567,000 children who were hurt by the refusal to end sanctions.

The experience of sanctions against Iraq shows that this kind of political pressure can be used as a weapon of economic mass destruction, inflicting collective punishment on innocent civilians. Similar policies used by Israel with U.S. support have contributed to major human suffering in the West Bank and Gaza.

The "food for oil" deal, Resolution 986, is a step toward completely lifting the embargo on Iraq but falls short of meeting the needs of the Iraqi people. Under the new deal Iraq will be allowed to sell $4 billion of oil each year. From a year's proceeds of $4 billion, 30 percent (about $1.2 billion) will go to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as war reparations; $0.2 billion to U.N. organizations monitoring weapons in Iraq and to Turkey for use of the pipeline for oil; and $2.6 billion to humanitarian purposes in Iraq.

In November 1990 Christian Peacemaker Teams sent a delegation to Iraq at the height of the Persian Gulf crisis. CPT and supporting congregations have continued to monitor the situation in Iraq and advocate for the Iraqi people. "Communications on behalf of hungry Iraqi people have contributed to this interim measure," says Kathy Kelly, coordinator of Voices in the Wilderness, a campaign to end sanctions against Iraq. Christian Peacemaker Corps member Anne Montgomery participated in several delegations to Iraq that drew attention to the starvation of the Iraqi people.

CPT supports sending delegations to Iraq to deliver medical supplies and develop personal connections with Iraqi people. Congregations are invited to help transport supplies, assist with expenses or encourage people to participate in the delegation, recognizing that transporting such supplies to Iraq may be a violation of the law. In order for Iraq to have the sanctions lifted completely, Iraq will have to prove that its weapons of mass destruction have been destroyed.

For information, contact CPT at P.O. Box 6508 Chicago, IL 60680; e-mail cpt@igc.apc.org; web: http://www.prairienet.org/cpt

Private paramilitary training firms run by former officers in Israel's secret services and elite army units are selling expertise learned on active duty. The International Security Academy is one of the larger Israeli companies that specialize in "security consultancy," that is, training bodyguards, security forces, SWAT teams, even local police forces. Boasting branches in the United States, Canada, Germany, Austria and the Philippines and across the former Soviet Union, the academy is one of the slicker but by no means the only such Israeli company. All told, the industry brings in "hundreds of millions of dollars a year," says *World Press Review*. Israel faces competition from U.S., German and British firms, but Israel has held an edge, especially in airport security—no El Al (national Israeli airline) plane has been hijacked or bombed in 20 years.

• • •

When public school teachers in Samambaia, Brazil, went on strike in April because of low salaries, children suffered, say Steve and Janet Plenert, Commission on Overseas Mission workers there. They decided to try to help some neighborhood children from kindergarten through grade five by offering "reinforcement classes" in the mornings at the Samambaia Mennonite Church. "We begin the time with a Bible passage and related story. It gives Bible input to the nonchurch kids and shows all of them that the Christian faith is important to their school work," says Janet. She tutors the children in math while Nityla Coimbra Pereira, a 15-year-old from the Ceilandia Mennonite Church, helps with Portuguese instruction. "Besides helping these kids through the school year, I hope to show the parents that they need to take responsibility for their children's education," says Janet.

***Soldier of Fortune* magazine will no longer be available on newsstands in Germany. The Armaments Information Office, which organized the effort to remove the magazine from newsstands, will check how other war and soldier magazines might be banned from German newsstands, and has announced possible corresponding criminal charges. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)**

* * *

Compulsory military service has ended in Belgium. Six years ago the Belgian army consisted of 100,000 soldiers, one-third of them conscripts. Now Belgian's armed services will have only 42,000 professionals. In Hungary, the army is reduced from 100,000 to 75,000. Hungary's 1995 defense budget was 40 percent less than in 1990, totaling only 1.48 percent of the gross national product. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

* * *

England's Prince Charles recently wrote in the *Guardian* newspaper that England should use lottery funds to build places of worship "of real quality" for various faiths. Jewish and Anglican leaders welcomed the call; Muslim leaders disagreed, saying money that comes from gambling cannot be used by Muslims for building mosques. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

* * *

Sixty-five percent of Americans who make less than $50,000 annually believe that a person cannot serve both God and money, according to a Louis Harris poll. Only 47 percent of those with higher incomes agreed. Seventy-five percent of those in the lower bracket believe that money is the root of all evil, compared with only half the wealthier people. Sixty percent of the lower bracket had prayed for guidance in financial matters, compared with 40 percent of those earning over $50,000. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

saw Iraqis selling. He tells me he, too, has sold all his valuables to survive. He says if one buys what others have sold, to have and hold for their own enjoyment, that's OK. To buy such items and then resell them for a profit is wrong, he says.

Under normal circumstances, the economist would have a comfortable, secure life. Now his tie clip is a large bobby pin. Until recently I'm sure it would have been gold. Each daughter has been allowed to keep one piece of jewelry; each wears a thin gold chain adorned with a cross.

During the meal I learn the wife and mother of this family died 10 months ago of liver cancer. The economist's tie clip is the bobby pin that used to hold his wife's hair. Its value to him is a thousand times greater than gold.

Back to Jordan: As I board the bus and head back to Jordan, I wish I could draw a smart, snappy conclusion about my two-week visit to Iraq, but I can't. The needs in Iraq are immense. The barriers between the aid and the people who need it are legion, not only the external barriers, such as the embargo, but also internal bureaucratic barriers.

Throughout my time in Iraq there was one constant with every Iraqi I spoke to. No matter how obvious their suffering was, they would always end their story with the Arabic expression, "Al hum di lulla," which literally translates as, "Thanks be to God." *Paul E. Pereverzoff, Rosthern, Sask., is a member of Pilgrims Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa. He and his wife, Rebecca, serve as MCC Jordan country co-representatives.*

Give The Mennonite to a friend.

Goshen College announces a half-time position for director and teacher in the **Hispanic Ministries** program. Includes responsibility to recruit, teach and supervise students in a program for training Hispanic church leaders. Advanced theological, biblical training required. Ph.D. preferred. Candidate should be capable of teaching in Spanish or English. Position open immediately and until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Respond to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660; e-mail: Johndn@goshen.edu**.

Record

MINISTERS

Doug Amstutz will serve as summer student pastor at West Zion Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Wanda Roth Amstutz will serve as summer student pastor at First Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Sean Dineen, Bluffton (Ohio) College, will serve as summer pastoral intern at Emmanuel Church, Reinholds, Pa.

Iris Hartshorn was installed as co-pastor at Houston (Texas) Church, May 19.

Deana Hines, Bluffton College, will serve as summer pastoral intern at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Curtiss Kanagy was licensed as youth pastor at East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., June 2.

C. Robert Lengel was ordained May 19 as pastor at Deep Run Church West, Bedminster, Pa.

Jennifer McAlpin, Bluffton College, will serve as summer pastoral intern at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Bonnie and **Chuck Neufeld** will be associate pastors at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., beginning in July.

Gary Peters and **Margaret Ewen Peters** were ordained May 19 as pastors at Hanley (Sask.) Church.

Jerry Shoup, Bluffton College, will serve as summer pastoral intern at Martin's Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio.

WORKERS

Jan Buerge, Kansas City, Mo., has been named coordinator of the direct participation program of Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

Christopher A. Gill has been appointed executive director of Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Lydia Harder has been appointed director of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre.

Julie Hart, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., is in Haiti this month with Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Moving?

Let us know six weeks ahead.

Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D., invites applications for a full-time **director** position to begin Sept. 1. Seeking couple or single person. Salary set according to conference guidelines.

Please send resume to **Dave Waldowski, 2213 S. Oxford Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106; (605) 361-2514 or (605) 336-9189**.

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church is in need of a **pastor**.

Interested candidates please direct inquiries to **John Taves (e-mail): Eileen_Taves@Mindlink.bc.ca** or to **Abe Olfert, (604) 859-4575; (fax) (604) 854-4320**. Resumes may be sent to: **West Abbotsford Mennonite Church Search Committee, 31216 King Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6C2**.

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has openings for a **biology instructor**, **Spanish instructor** (70 percent), and a **director of alumni relations** (50 percent).

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446**.

Director of business affairs—Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Experience with business office functions, computer operations and personnel supervision is required.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446**.

Urgent openings with Mennonite Central Committee! Five and possibly more **administrative assistants/secretaries** are needed at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., in the following departments:

- MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries department—needed immediately. Salaried.
- East Asia department—needed in June. Salaried.
- Constituency Ministries—needed by July. Salaried.
- Communications/Literature Distribution—needed by August. Service position.
- Africa department—needed by October. Salaried.

Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking.

For more information in the United States contact **Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada, contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**.

Due to an unexpected resignation for health reasons, **Faith & Life Press**, publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church, invites applications for the position of

Director of Customer Services

We seek an individual to provide vision and direction for sales, marketing and customer services for Faith & Life Press. This person will participate in FLP's Management Team, report to the Director of Operations, and participate creatively in helping shape FLP's future.

Responsibilities include strategic planning in sales and marketing, oversight of distribution process, and supervision of Faith & Life Bookstore managers and support services staff. A positive, proactive attitude is vital and experience in problem solving required. A college degree, business and marketing experience, computer skills and knowledge of church constituency is preferred.

Position currently open and applications accepted until position is filled.

Address inquiries and resumes to **Norma J. Johnson, Publisher, Faith & Life Press, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; fax (316) 283-0454; e-mail: normaj@gcmc.org**.

Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in northeastern Pennsylvania, has two positions open:

- **Guest group coordinator:** Responsible for coordinating arrangements and billing for guest groups. Also share in receptionist and other office duties. Year-round, salaried position. Begin July 1996.
- Combined position of **teacher/naturalist** (in Spruce Lake Outdoor School) and **program assistant** (includes role of children's activity leader). Salaried position.

Contact **Paul Beiler at 1-800-822-7505 or fax resume to (717) 595-0328**.

Akron Mennonite Church is seeking an **associate pastor**, beginning any time after August. The associate pastor works closely with the pastor and a lay pastoral team. Approximately 50 percent of the time will be devoted to pastoral care of and ministry with youth, young adults and children. The other half will include general pastoral service, preaching, Christian education resourcing and small-group work, all shared with the pastor. M.Div. preferred and experience required.

Inquiries can be directed to: **Search Committee Chairperson, Akron Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 208, Akron, PA 17501; fax (717) 859-3942**.

Mennonite World Conference
Dec. 29, 1996-Jan. 22, 1997
with
Henry and Martha Fast
(consultant with MEDA, formerly MCC India)
Including: Hong Kong, Raipur, Calcutta, Delhi, Jaipur, Agra and Bali
Deposit of $400 due by June 30 to avoid late registration fee

Contact **Ruth Wiebe, Bonaventure Travel, 1-161 Stafford St., Winnipeg MB R3M 2W9; (204) 477-4581; fax (204) 475-0494.**

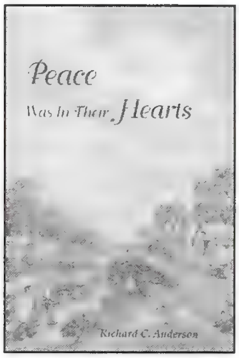
The Courage Not to Fight

Peace was in Their Hearts

By **Richard C. Anderson**

Twelve thousand men during World War II acted on their beliefs and became conscientious objectors. This is a moving chronicle of opinion and achievement by those who refused to go to the killing fields of war. An inspiring account of:

- — the passion of their convictions
- — their work in Civilian Public Service
- — their frustrations, challenges, and triumphs
- — the logic of their "impossible ideal"



Paper, 318 pages, $17.95; in Canada $25.75.

Available through your local bookstore or by calling
1 800 759-4447.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com

http://www.mph.lm.com/hp.html

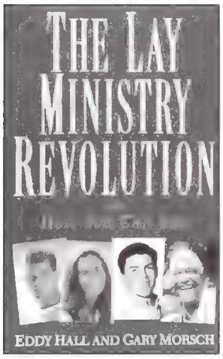
Reviews

BOOKS

RECLAIMING MINISTRY

The Lay Ministry Revolution: How You Can Join *by Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch (Beacon Hill Press, 1995, 125 pages)*

Reviewed by Mathew Swora, McPherson, Kan.



Consumerism has come to church, and with it the traditional expectation that pastors are there to serve up some religious product to a passive audience in the pews.

But *The Lay Ministry Revolution* seeks to re-educate laity and ministers to the biblical truth that the true goal of Christian leadership and ministry is to nurture and release more leadership and ministry among all believers (Ephesians 4:11-12). Isn't that what Jesus did with his disciples? With Hall and Morsch's book we've come from questioning if there should even be ministers (as was popular in the 1970s) to questioning the validity of "laity."

The book is laid out in six easy-to-read lessons full of anecdotes. It's meant to be read by a church or Sunday school class, which is consistent with one of the authors' central tenets: that ministry gifts and callings are discovered and developed in community. There are lesson plans and clear, helpful suggestions for leading groups through each chapter. The readability level should make it accessible to most or nearly all church members.

The chapter on "The Myth of Secular Work" addresses a primary roadblock to training and deploying lay ministry: today's runaway work schedules. Some who take this chapter seriously may be inspired to re-evaluate and quit their current jobs for ones with more human contact and value, and perhaps less pay.

Is the Spirit now moving against consumerism and passivity in the church? Is it breaking out of our sanctuaries and taking ministry back into the world? Other trends like the cell church movement and Promise Keepers also aim to reclaim total church ministry. Every effort helps, and *The Lay Ministry Revolution* is a positive and practical contribution toward this worthy end. But don't read it alone. Read it with a group or as a church.

UNFORGIVABLE SIN?

Embodying Forgiveness: A Theological Analysis *by L. Gregory Jones (Eerdmans, 1995, 313 pages)*

Reviewed by Carol Penner, Vineland, Ont.

What is Christian forgiveness about? Gregory Jones explores the theme of forgiveness in a number of different and engaging ways. He looks at what it means for God to forgive us and what it means for us to live in community with each other, knowing that we are forgiven. He suggests that forgiveness is " … not so much a word spoken, an action performed or a feeling felt as it is an embodied way of life in an ever-deepening friendship with the Triune God and with others."

The appeal of this book lies in the author's willingness to sink his teeth into hard stories. This book grapples with the Holocaust, oppression in Latin America and sexual abuse. He is not afraid to look suffering in the eye to see the anger and hatred it sometimes produces. Issues such as these have challenged our ability and even our desire to forgive; Jones discusses whether there is such a thing as an unforgivable sin and asks what it might be.

One of the strengths of the book lies in its scope. It covers a broad range of topics, drawing from such diverse sources as popular religious literature on forgiveness, Clint Eastwood's movie *Unforgiven* and Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*. Some sections of the book that compare different theologians' positions may be too dense for some readers, but this shouldn't deter you from reading this book, as the same point is usually discussed in a different format that is more accessible to the average reader.

I found the book thought-provoking. In Mennonite theology there has always been an emphasis on suffering, but little discussion about forgiveness. Perhaps the assumption is that suffering will not produce hatred or anger in Mennonites, or perhaps forgiveness has been understood as so straightforward that we don't need to talk about it. It seems to me that

TOURMAGINATION

MEXICO '96

November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

forgiveness is one of the things that is at the heart of what it means to be a peacemaker. This book is a thorough theological examination of forgiveness, and I highly recommend it.

RIPE FOR DISASTER

Minor Prophets Major Themes *by Daniel Berrigan (Fortkamp Publishing, 1995, 405 pages)*

Reviewed by Kathleen Kern, Webster, N.Y.

In the Ancient Near East, the Israelite religion was not unique in its rituals, writings or codes of law—although one could argue that it had a more egalitarian emphasis than other religions of the region and era. What really set the Israelite religion apart, however, was the prophetic movement. Only in Judaism were the words of people who challenged the status quo elevated to holy Scripture.

It is appropriate, then, that Daniel Berrigan, a Jesuit priest frequently incarcerated for his opposition to war and other grim aspects of the status quo, should write what is loosely called a commentary on the Minor Prophets. I use the term "loosely," because *Minor Prophets Major Themes* is equal parts scholarship, political rant and poetry. Written at a time when the Gulf War loomed large in Berrigan's thinking, the book connects prophetic concerns with contemporary political situations.

Berrigan demonstrates that nothing much has changed. He also demonstrates competent scholarship in his approach to the texts and in attempts to translate the Hebrew nuances into English. For example, in Amos 8:2, when God asks Amos what he sees in a vision, Amos replies, "A basket of summer fruit" ("qayits" in Hebrew). To which God replies, "The end ("qets" in Hebrew) has come upon my people Israel." Berrigan picks up on the wordplay of qayits and qets, writing, "A basket of ripe fruit appears. So are the people ripe—for disaster."

My chief criticism of the book is that people less biblically literate than Berrigan may have trouble separating his personal musings from what the prophets actually say. I also found Berrigan's idiosyncratic spellings off-putting (e.g., "Jawe" for Yahweh or YHWH and "Osee" for Hosea) and his use of Latin phrases confusing.

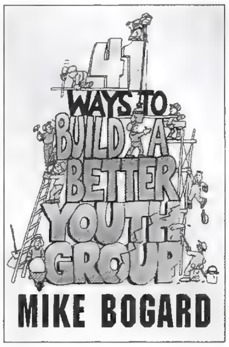
Minor Prophets Major Themes might best be used to augment a standard commentary in a traditional Bible study. Its use in a group Bible study context should provoke many long discussions.

TIPS FOR YOUTH LEADERS

41 Ways to a Better Youth Group *by Mike Bogard (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 180 pages)*

Reviewed by Dale Klassen and Beverly Lapp, Goshen, Ind.

We enjoyed reading this practical guide to youth leading. It is an exhaustive review of the issues involved in running a successful youth program, organized in four large sections: leadership, worship, community and mission. The topics within these sections are varied and very real, such as calendar planning, involvement of parents, how to handle hot topics, making music together, forming a group identity, celebrating life-markers and confronting culture.



The goal of the book is clearly to help the leaders succeed. We appreciated the balance between an emphasis on Christian instruction and the need for teenagers to be open to other points of view. It constantly notes that youth are searching for answers and not regimented dogma. It is an excellent aid for leaders who want to help youth discuss questions of faith and lifestyle from a Christian perspective.

Each chapter is organized efficiently—no time is wasted in presenting a given problem, listing reasons for it and giving possible solutions. Bogard's writing style is extremely readable. The book is full of bold headings, subheadings, visual examples and boxes titled "quick tips" relating to the chapter. Although the book is visually "busy" because of this, it also makes it friendly for quick reference.

Each chapter opens with a story, which helps the reader maintain interest and curiosity. At times, however, these stories seemed contrived, and while some of them lead nicely into the practical advice that follows, some could just as easily have been left out.

Bogard's book is ideal for youth leaders with no formal training for working with youth and equally suitable for those youth leaders with lots of experience who may need an infusion of energy. It belongs in every church library. As beginners in a youth coordinating position, we found the book to be readable, helpful and thought-provoking.

Resources

- **Sent into God's World** by Helen Dueck is a new Bible study guide produced by Women in Mission and Women's Missionary and Service Commission. Available for $4 U.S. ($5 Cdn.) from Women in Mission, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, or Women's Missionary & Service Commission, 421 S. 2nd St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46515-3243, (219) 294-7131.
- **Ezekiel** by Millard C. Lind (Herald Press, 1996, $19.95 U.S./$28.50 Cdn.) is the latest in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series.
- **Living Unplugged: Young Adults, Faith and the Uncommon Life** by Pam Peters-Pries (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) shows young adults the Christian faith is a meaningful force in their lives and in the world.
- **Caring for the Whole Person** by E. Anthony Allen, M.D. (MARC, 1995, $9.95 U.S.) calls the Christian health professional to be a healer, which involves being a trainer, advocate and a community builder.
- **Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership: A Guide to Organizations in Changing Times** by Berit Lakey, George Lakey, Rod Napier and Janice M. Robinson (New Society Publishers, 1996, $16.95 U.S.) addresses the needs of nonprofit managers, religious leaders and managers of progressive businesses.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 505 RRI
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Six dreams for the future

As I prepare to conclude my work as general secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church and turn over these responsibilities to James Schrag, I offer some dreams for the future. These are things I would encourage were I to continue as general secretary.

1. Cooperation: It is increasingly important for Mennonites to cooperate with other Christian denominations. This is true for congregations as well as district or area conferences. Such cooperation is especially important in thinly populated rural areas. A community that once had three or four good-sized congregations may now find itself with one or two small churches. Here and there, Mennonites have worked together with others in summer Bible school, youth ministries, Sunday school and sharing of pastors, but much more could be done.

In urban areas, increased cooperation might make more effective specialized ministries possible, such as working on peace and justice concerns or victim/offender ministries. The order of the day is to seek additional ways to work together with other groups and take advantage of every opportunity that comes our way.

It will take a measure of grace for us to process differences, misunderstandings and conflicts in the manner that strengthens our communities rather than fragments them.

2. Change: We need to risk change in local congregations and conferences. To reject change often results in a slow death. Already in many congregations, leadership has been passed from those over 60 to those in their 30s and 40s. The challenge is how to give more responsibility to youth and young adults in our congregations and conferences. One of our priorities is to enrich our worship. To do so may require taking the risk of including a greater variety of music and drama and the occasional element of surprise in order to enliven and enrich our worship experience.

3. Respect: I sense the need for us to listen more carefully and respectfully to each other. Often our diversity puts a great strain on our unity. In our gatherings, whether as a congregation or a conference, we often disagree, but we can still remain sisters and brothers in Christ.

4. Communication: Those of us in conference leadership must do a better job of communicating with congregations so that they see the work of the church beyond themselves as a coherent, interconnected whole. To accomplish this will take creative determination on our part.

5. Focus: The vision statement accepted by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church at Wichita '95 has great potential to generate energy, creativity and focus for our church life in congregations, the local conferences and throughout the denomination. Every leader in the church should memorize this vision. When we gather together in conferences, we should be able to say it with power in a manner similar to the way we sing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

6. Grace: The vision calls us to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace. The measure by which we do this will likely correlate with spiritual and numerical growth that congregations and conferences can expect in the coming decade. Grace, joy and peace are qualities desperately needed in a world burdened with violence, loneliness, hurt, anxiety and conflict. Unresolved conflict within congregations and conferences is deadly. It will take a measure of grace for us to process differences, misunderstandings and conflicts in the manner that strengthens our communities rather than fragments them.

These are some of the challenges I see for the decade ahead. I fully expect to see a significant measure of growth in many of these areas, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Vern Preheim

Recyclable

Inside

Pacifism: a Mennonite heresy? / p. 11

Form an investment club / p. 12

Inmates go to church to sing / p. 13

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 13
JULY 9, 1996

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
ELKHART LIBRARY
JUL 19 '96

Choosing to be Mennonite

- From 007 fan to ardent pacifist (page 3)
- After the martyrs exhibit (page 5)
- Drawing the line on who we are (page 6)

Tom Oliver

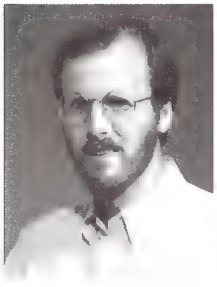
Prologue

You'll notice in our long Letters section (three pages this time) some discussion of a Speaking Out piece in our May 28 issue that said evangelism is a heresy when it excludes love for our neighbors and our enemies. This issue includes a Speaking Out piece (page 11) that says pacifism that does not preach faith in Christ is a heresy. This may be a case of speaking past each other, but we'll let you decide.

This issue includes stories from two men who came to the Mennonite church from other traditions. Tom Oliver (page 3) left the Army reserves after deciding he could not be a faithful Christian in that milieu. Fortunately a Mennonite, Stanley Green, helped him make that change.

Perry Bush (page 6) teaches at one of our schools, Bluffton (Ohio) College. Having come from an evangelical background, he calls us not to give up our beliefs about peace and justice.

Jean Janzen, whose poem in a 1995 issue has now won two awards (see page 14), offers another poem (page 5), which she wrote after seeing a martyrs exhibit in the Netherlands.



J.B. Miller writes about forming an investment club (page 12).

And check out the news section for an exciting story (page 13) about a Mennonite woman who helped bring together a choir of prisoners and other singers to perform in a church. *gh*

Next issue: What's in a name?

Cover: Photo by Carla Reimer

Contents

FEATURES

3 From 007 fan to ardent pacifist

Tom Oliver grew up fascinated with the military, but after being in it, he heard God call him to the way of peace in the Mennonite church.

5 After the martyrs exhibit

A poem

6 Drawing the line on who we are

As we cooperate with evangelicals, let us not set aside our ethical essentials, like peace and justice and showing mercy to the poor.

DEPARTMENTS

8 Letters
11 Speaking out
12 Fiscal health
13 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

From 007 fan to ardent pacifist

Tom Oliver grew up fascinated with the military, but after being in it, he heard God call him to the way of peace in the Mennonite church.

Carla Reimer

> **"I wanted to be like James Bond, a killing machine who could make a bomb out of a toothpick. I thought the uniforms were cool and it would be a good way to get girls."**

Tom Oliver's fascination with the military began when he was a diaper-clad toddler. In fact, he still has a photo of himself, as a youngster, wearing a plastic combat helmet and his dad's Army boots.

By the time he was in ninth grade, Tom had signed up for the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) in order to be on the fast track to a military career. "I was itching to join. I had learned that the most important events in history were wars," he says. "I wanted to be like James Bond, a killing machine who could make a bomb out of a toothpick. I thought the uniforms were cool and it would be a good way to get girls."

Today, as a member of the Mennonite church, Tom has a much different take on the military. If anything, he wishes Mennonites had a stronger peace witness.

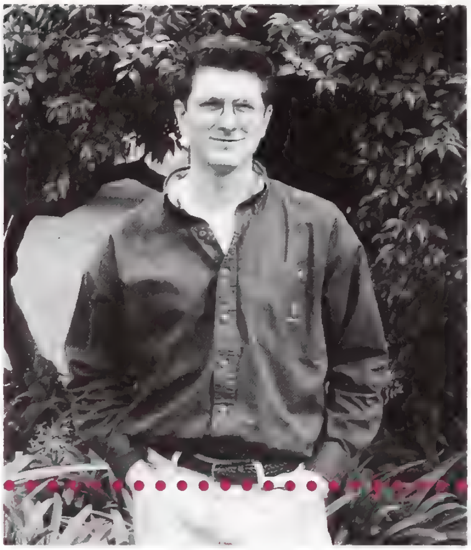
But in 1977, at the impressionable age of 14, Tom had never heard of pacifists when he decided to join the JROTC at his junior high school in Denver. His role models came from within the Southern Baptist Church, where belonging to the military was virtually "a rite of passage" for male members. "The youth pastors at my church all served in the military. I liked the idea that people in the military knew what they stood for," he says.

"I believed that if you live in a free country, you have to be willing to defend it. I never went to the Bible to support my views. I had American heroes instead," he says. "I had no questions about it. I thought it was something I was supposed to do."

Shooting range: As a JROTC member, he wore a uniform to school once a week and received credit for classes on topics such as the military structure. He also practiced at a shooting range at the school, which meant he was a member of the National Rifle Association.

Tom "loved" every part of it. In his last year of high school, he was named the

> **“We had to chant degrading remarks and were told to worship our guns.”**
>
> ***Tom Oliver***



Carla Reimer

battalion commander, the highest post he could attain. He also won numerous awards, including cadet of the year.

So it came as no surprise when he joined the college-level Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) not long after he graduated from high school at the age of 17. Ironically, though, his father, who was a Baptist pastor, didn’t applaud his decision.

But then, his dad was a bit of an anomaly within Baptist circles, says Tom. Somewhere between a pacifist and a just war proponent, he, on one occasion, even sat down on some railroad tracks in Wyoming to protest nuclear weapons. He also taught his children to be open to understanding other religious views in order to strengthen their own faith.

While Tom trained with the ROTC for one weekend a month and two weeks each summer, he also was enrolled at Metropolitan State College in Denver. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in communications, with an emphasis in filmmaking, in spring 1985.

In the meantime, he had finished his basic ROTC training and had been commissioned as a second lieutenant within the Army reserves. He says the majority of the military consists of the Army reserves.

But while he was quick to gain authority within the military structure, Tom was not happy with the relative lack of morality he encountered there. His teenage view of the military was shattered early on in his training when his drill sergeant hammered home the point that patriotism had no place in the Army. “He basically told us that he owned our butts,” says Tom. “We also had to chant degrading remarks and were told to worship our guns.”

In general, the military had little respect for a person’s religious beliefs. “It was a sacrilegious atmosphere. We had to work on Sundays,” he says. “If I wanted to go to church, I had to make up the time with demeaning, menial chores. I stopped going to church.”

Instead he immersed himself in alcohol and dabbled in drugs, activities that are common in the military culture, he says.

Embarrassed: In February 1985, when he met his future wife, Patti Hauptman, he was embarrassed by what he had become. Fortunately, she was a strong Christian who was able to straighten him out, he says. They were married in August 1985 and moved to Mt. Vernon, Iowa, where Patti enrolled in classes at Cornell College.

> **“Too many Mennonites are trying to be like everyone else. Pacifism is one of the things that keep us from being acculturated.”**

It was while Patti was preparing a speech about the death penalty that the couple first began studying the Bible together in an in-depth manner. Tom argued for the death penalty based on the Old Testament, while Patti argued against it based on the New Testament.

Soon they were reading three to four chapters of the Bible each evening and spending several hours discussing them. Two years later, after reading the entire Bible, the couple reached the conclusion that they were pacifists.

“It was scary for me to realize this because I was still in the Army reserves. I thought if I declared myself as a conscientious objector, I might have to go to jail,” says Tom, noting that the military hadn’t informed him of his right to leave. “They keep it a secret; otherwise, people would be leaving the military in droves.”

The couple left Iowa in May 1986 for Fort Harrison, Ind., where Tom spent the next five months receiving his officer basic course training. Near the end of 1986 they moved to Burbank, Calif., where they later found a job showing films at high schools across the United States about drug and alcohol abuse.

While they were traveling for their work, the couple ate at a restaurant with Amish food in Plain City, Ohio, and picked up some information on Mennonites at a Choice Books display. After reading the material, they realized that Mennonites believed what they believed.

They consequently began attending Mennonite churches as often as possible on their road trips. They felt welcomed by the people they met in these congregations. "You weren't left standing alone at the coffee pot," Tom says.

When a pastor at an Ohio church explained that Tom could leave the military if he declared himself as a conscientious objector, he immediately took action to file the necessary paperwork to obtain this status. It took the military about nine months to process his papers.

In the meantime, the couple moved back to the Los Angeles area, where they began attending Faith Mennonite Church in Downey, Calif. When the church approached Tom about becoming an elder, he told them he wouldn't feel right about accepting that position or being a member of the congregation until he was out of the military.

'God watched over me': Stanley Green, who is now the president of Mennonite Board of Missions, was Tom's advocate on the day of his hearing before a military board. "God watched over me. Everything went smoothly. About four months later the troops were called to duty in Saudi Arabia as part of the Desert Shield operation," says Tom. He had never been called to serve in a war in all his years with the Army reserves.

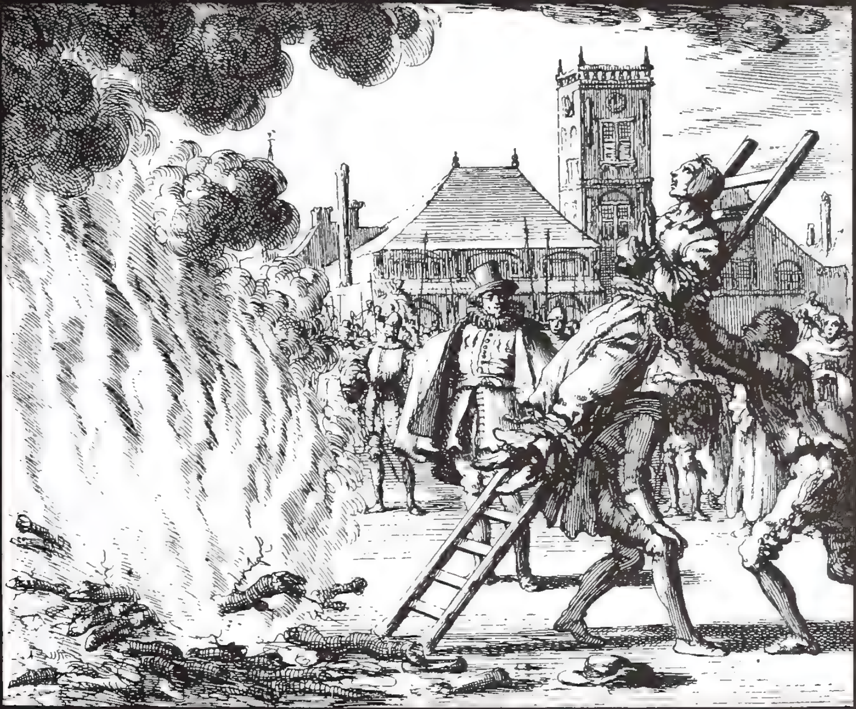
Although Tom thinks Mennonites have many vital projects related to pacifism, such as Christian Peacemaker Teams, he would like to see the church do more.

"Too many Mennonites are trying to be like everyone else. Pacifism is one of the things that keep us from being acculturated," he says. He worries that Virginia Mennonite Conference's decision to accept congregations that receive military personnel as members has the potential of weakening the church.

"Military people are strong in a way that pacifists are not. They are already accepted by the majority of Americans," he says. "A lot of Mennonites seem to be infatuated with the military.

"Mennonites used to wear distinctive dress. Mennonites used to believe in simple living. About all that is left anymore is peace," says Tom. "If Mennonites abandon the peace stance, what makes us any different from other churches?"

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.



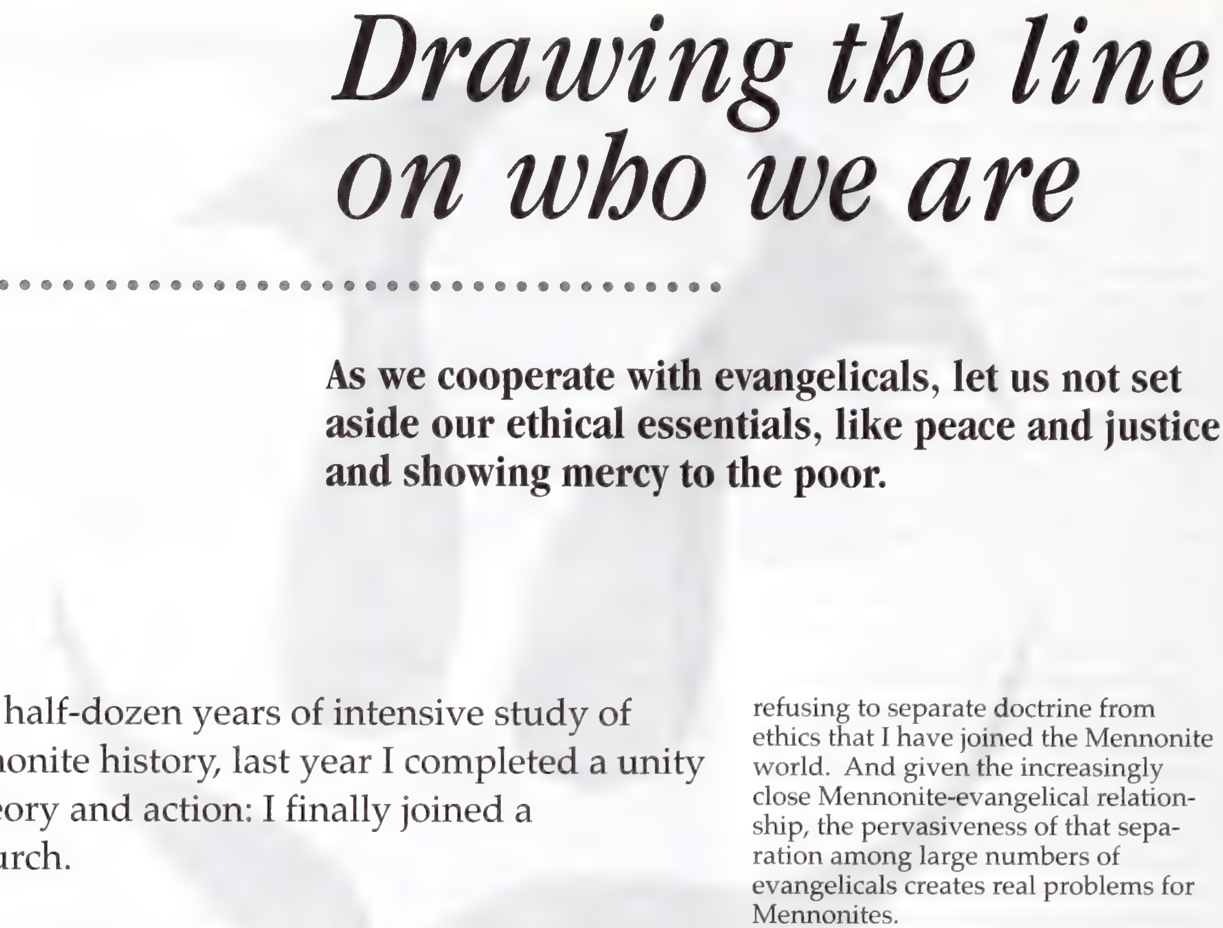
After the martyrs exhibit

Jean Janzen

The way the sparrows sing
in the bushes, you would think
that no one could torture another,
especially this hour before dinner
as evening spreads its silk cloth.
We had seen the copper plates
under display lights, each line
etched to evoke remembrance—
acid for my conscience.
Rolled ink, the press on paper,
and there she stands,
her skirt flaming, mouth singing.

We dip hummus and swallow,
talk easily as evening folds.
Sliced bamboo driven under fingernails.
The jeering. The betrayal of dawn.
I never said I could do it.

Jean Janzen, whose latest collection of poems is Snake in the Parsonage *(Good Books, 1996), lives in Fresno, Calif.*



Drawing the line on who we are

As we cooperate with evangelicals, let us not set aside our ethical essentials, like peace and justice and showing mercy to the poor.

Perry Bush

After a half-dozen years of intensive study of Mennonite history, last year I completed a unity of theory and action: I finally joined a Mennonite church.

For the past decade or two in my faith journey I have shuffled between two worlds, caught somewhere between Mennonitism and evangelicalism.

I grew up in the warm, supportive folds of the evangelical subculture, in the world of high school youth rallies and church fellowship meetings. In college I attended an evangelical Presbyterian church and weekly meetings of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. I am indebted to such experiences because in them I formed a fundamental commitment to Christian faith that still holds me.

That evangelical subculture had and has some firm ethical commitments. There was some consciousness about hunger issues, and we heard a lot about proper sexual relationships. While I am disappointed at the way many evangelicals have largely stilled their prophetic voice, I still rejoice in the demonstrations of evangelical social concern: agencies like World Vision International or the ready evangelical cooperation in groups like Habitat for Humanity.

Nonetheless, as I grew into my older teens, I became frustrated with the kind of fundamental separation I saw many of my evangelical teachers and friends making between doctrine and ethics. Repeatedly I heard ethics relegated to a secondary level in the evangelical hierarchy of important issues. The line went something like this:

"Sure, it's important to take care of the poor, feed the hungry and deal with those kinds of social concerns, but the most important thing is to get the unsaved to accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. Once we're finished with that, we can deal with some of society's problems. Besides, if everyone was a Christian, we would not have a lot of social problems. Get your doctrine right, come to Jesus first, push salvation first. Then you can consider all those smaller, less important, temporal issues like concern for justice, for the poor, for peace."

Even as a teenager, that dichotomy between doctrine and ethics troubled me. I didn't see Jesus doing that. Jesus spent a lot of time ministering to the poor and sick, time that ideally he could have spent preaching and evangelizing. In fact, I suspected that in Jesus' mind, meeting people's physical needs was evangelism; certainly he refused to separate the two.

To simplify my own spiritual journey, it is because I see Mennonites refusing to separate doctrine from ethics that I have joined the Mennonite world. And given the increasingly close Mennonite-evangelical relationship, the pervasiveness of that separation among large numbers of evangelicals creates real problems for Mennonites.

Incinerate millions: These problems have been exacerbated by the relationship that many evangelicals have established with the state. In the past half century, our nation has embraced modern war: war practiced without any restraint or limitation and directed at soldier and civilian alike. We have seen this kind of warfare institutionalized in national defense policy and in nuclear deterrence, which aims to protect Americans from attack by preparing to incinerate millions of enemies.

In constructing such a defense policy, the government wanted to quiet somehow the prophetic voices that sometimes rise in dissent. In particular, the state needed the support of the churches. To this end, our warfare state has developed a fruitful and satisfying relationship with many American evangelicals. That relationship was solidified in the struggle against communism, a terrifying authoritarian force that officially defined itself as atheist. To help mobilize people in this struggle, the government embraced the church as it never had; it called the nation's preachers to assist in the construction of a new civil religion, to enlist God on our side in the Cold War.

Evangelicals seemed delighted to

Elysia Caldwell Bush

Perry Bush with his children

It is because I see Mennonites refusing to separate doctrine from ethics that I have joined the Mennonite world.

respond. Two decades earlier, in the 1920s, they had been hooted out of mainstream culture in episodes like the Scopes trial; they had been dismissed by mainstream culture as ignorant, backwoods ranters. Now the country needed them to preach the American gospel, and they responded beautifully. This nation has since been swept repeatedly by waves of evangelical revivals. Evangelicals discovered that it felt good to be needed, to be so enlisted in the national enterprise; they now had a place in American society. Before long they made their power felt: We have seen born-again presidents praying with born-again congresspeople; we have born-again celebrities, born-again sports heroes, born-again rock stars.

Prophetic capacity: But all this new power and affirmation descending upon evangelicals—this treasured and honored place created for them in American life—has come with a small catch. "You evangelicals," the state says, "are important people. We need you. We must ask one thing in return: Could you just draw a small distinction between your doctrine and your ethics? Could you just cool your prophetic capacity for a while?"

Today, in the same way, a number of evangelicals are now turning toward Mennonites and saying, "Welcome into the fellowship of evangelical believers. There's a place for you here. Sure, you have your own particular group beliefs, your own ethnic peculiarities like your little thing about peacemaking. That doesn't bother us, we can live with it. The important thing is just to join with us in the work of Christ's kingdom. To set aside those ethical nonessentials and affirm our common doctrinal solidarity."

It's a tempting offer. It would feel good to come into the warmth of fellowship with the larger evangelical world. We Mennonites can learn a lot from evangelicals. It's a particularly attractive option for another reason, too. We want to get away from a sense of ethnic shame; we want to be respectable citizens. Joining with good American evangelicals is a powerful inducement for an ethnoreligious people who have recently acculturated, who are looking for an acceptable way to define themselves as Americans.

It's hard to turn away from such an invitation.

Nonetheless, we need to be careful in our response. We need to say to our evangelical brothers and sisters in Christ: "We would love to work with you. You have a lot to teach us. Let's join in the common work we can do together. But don't ask us to park our ethics at the door. Don't ask us to quiet the prophetic voice to which God has called us. We will be glad to work with you, but we'll still talk about peace and justice and showing mercy to the poor. And we are going to call you all to a deeper appreciation of those demanding aspects of the Christian walk. Even as we work together, don't ask us to make this false separation between doctrinal essentials and ethical nonessentials. They are both part and parcel of Christ's kingdom."

Perry Bush is associate professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College and a member of First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Letters

ON MERIT PAY FOR LEADERS

J.B. Miller's "Merit Pay for Church Leaders?" (May 14 issue, page 12) left me wondering whether to laugh or cry—not because merit pay is always a bad idea necessarily, but because he shows so little understanding of the institutions he criticizes.

His idea of requiring college faculty to "recruit a certain number of students each year," for example, is astonishing. Would he support giving upper-level Mennonite Mutual Aid bureaucrats a quota of new customers to recruit each year?

The effort to measure "success" by numbers and body counts, seems to me pernicious and mean-spirited.

Prospective college students are already recruited intensely by highly sophisticated and professionalized admissions staffs all over the country, including those at Mennonite colleges. Even modestly qualified students get piles of mail from colleges they may not even be remotely interested in. My colleagues and I on teaching faculties are already deeply involved with those efforts. Here at Bluffton (Ohio) College, for instance, we routinely talk with prospective students, often come back to campus on weekends for recruitment events and make phone calls to prospective students in our subject areas.

I also teach 36 quarter hours a year, a schedule that typically has me on campus from eight to five and often leaves me with two to four hours of evening grading or reading. (I read Miller's article in a brief lull after supper, with another stack of papers facing me, which partly accounts for the testiness of this letter.) When am I supposed to recruit? By summer—my only "free" time—most students have made their college decisions. Maybe I can stay home from church and make calls on Sunday morning.

Miller's ideas about numerical criteria for evaluating pastors seem to me equally shallow and manipulative. Do we really want to pressure pastors to make many visits, not good visits? To bring as many bodies as possible into the church, whether or not they are truly attuned to the congregation's vision and mission? To measure practically everything on a numerical basis? Certain kinds of church members would relish such "accountability," I know, but I am hard-pressed to say what such bean-counting has to do with the reign of Jesus.

The bottom-line mentality of Miller's article, the effort to measure "success" by numbers and body counts, seems to me pernicious and mean-spirited. I hope we will resist it. *Jeff Gundy, Bluffton, Ohio*

J.B. Miller's article (May 14) was interesting. Since Mr. Miller suggests that we bring corporate America into the church, may I suggest several more additions besides merit pay for leaders?

Membership in the church is automatically dropped after a set number of absences. Membership is also canceled if members fail to pay certain dues (tithes?). Members of church boards, college boards or mission boards are each required to raise a certain amount of the budget or they forfeit their seats. I was a member of a board of trustees of a church college (not Mennonite) where this was a requirement of the trustees. Members of church boards forfeit their seats also if they fail to bring in a certain number of new members each year. Congregations who fail to pay expected dues to conferences and national church boards will be dropped from the rolls. As the pay of the church/mission/

J.B. Miller (May 14° proposes merit pay for the missions executive, for educational leaders and faculty members, and for pastors. Our society testifies abundantly to the effectiveness of financial incentives, so his question is a realistic one.

Consider first the likely impact of merit pay for Mennonite liberal arts college administrators and faculty, tied to enrollment. Recently we have gone through times when the numbers of Mennonite youth of college age have decreased from year to year. Ask yourself if your Mennonite church is baptizing as many youth from the congregation in a typical year as it did a generation ago. In the face of declining populations, how does the college respond? One way is to hire more admissions and church relations staff. Another is to require the faculty to spend more time contacting and hosting students. A third is to enrich its scholarship program, which has to take money from somewhere. But suppose none of these is effective enough to give key college personnel merit raises? The obvious temptation is to adjust admissions standards to admit more students who are less likely to succeed in college. Are those who champion merit pay for educators going to be happy with this?

Turning to missions, if the number of missionaries in the field falls, how will the mission agency respond? One way is to invest more in personnel and increase overhead. Another is to develop new forms of mission work in the hope of attracting more missionary candidates. If these fail, the mission agency may well devise an inconspicuous way to lower its standards for some types of missionary candidates in the hope of sending more of them to foreign fields.

The executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) is serving us well, and the number of missionaries is increasing. His predecessor, who served us well for nearly 12 years, saw the number of missionaries in the field drop for most of those years. Should he have been reviewed for merit pay and found wanting year after year? No! The reasons for the long slide in numbers are partly historical and partly a product of the times. He maintained good policies, a high quality of people in the field, and left the post of executive secretary to become a missionary with COM.

I can hear Mr. Miller crying "foul," saying he never dreamed of such measures of last resort. But the relaxation of standards, whether for students or missionaries, comes quickly to mind as soon as the honorable alternatives fail, and boards of directors would have a hard time preventing it. That's why merit pay is a bad idea. *Thomas Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.*

INTERACTIVE PRAYER EXPERIENCE

I came upon your magazine in the Graduate Theological Union Library in Berkeley, Calif. May I ask your readers to help me with a project?

I am researching human experience

with interactive prayer. Have you had any experience of conversations with God? Have you heard, seen or otherwise received a message from God, guiding you to do something, say something to someone or perform any kind of action? Have you then asked God for clarification, for further guidance or help, or told God the reasons why you would prefer not to perform the action? Have you argued with God? What happened? As I said, I am looking for concrete experiences of divine-human interaction, conversations or communication with God, with input from both sides.

I am an Episcopalian with a deep interest in prayer and hope to share in a book what you and others tell me. If you are willing to share your experiences with me, please write me at P.O. Box 4608, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.
Elizabeth Walter

EVANGELISM NOT A HERESY

I was upset over the article by Wayne Northey, "When Evangelism Is a Heresy" (May 28 issue, page 11). I would not want to sit in judgment on Billy Graham. The Bible didn't only say "Love your neighbor as yourself." It also says, "Judge not lest ye be judged." If Graham didn't preach exactly as he ought, Mennonites and most other preachers don't either. We always hear of the love of God but never of the judgment of God, so we aren't preaching all we should either.

In the New Testament, the disciples preached the gospel and appointed deacons to take care of the other needs of the church.

Billy Graham has also been to North Korea to speak to their former leader. Does Northey know exactly what Graham said in his talks?

When we try to interpret the Bible we should take the whole Bible, not just our preconceived ideas of what it should say.

In his letter, Reuben Krehbiel (May 28 issue, page 9) paints Republicans as people who do not care for the poor. We've tried giving to the poor for over 30 years, and there are only more and more, and the government is going broke trying to keep up. "Anyone unwilling to work should not eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). The Republicans wanted to change welfare in that way and now that Clinton has found it is popular with the majority, he says, "Me, too." Does Krehbiel condone the veto by Clinton of the amendment of partial birth abortion, the acceptance of gays in the military, the confessed adultery (besides the accusations) of President Clinton? The Republican platform is pro-life.

If the churches were all doing their part, we wouldn't need national welfare, and none of the money would be wasted through graft. If we weren't overburdened with taxes we could give tithes and offerings to the Lord.
Mrs. Dorothy Liechty, Berne, Ind.

In response to "When Evangelism Is a Heresy" (May 28), first, the Scriptures declare that salvation comes from God through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8). Northey claims "it is impossible to find Jesus if we do not find ourselves in the other, supremely in the enemy." To suggest that loving one's enemy is a part of the doctrine of salvation is clearly unscriptural and falls into the category of a salvation based on faith plus works. In Romans 3:24 we are "justified freely by his grace through redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

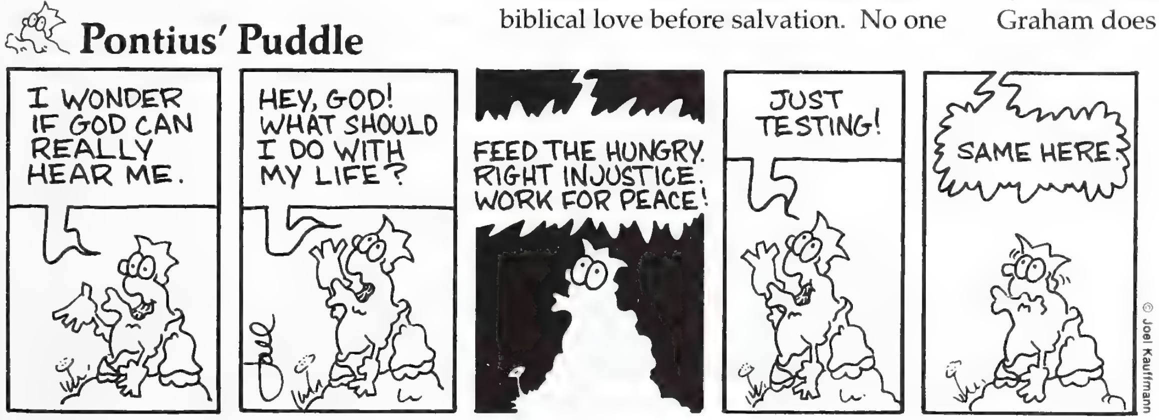
Second, the fruit of the Spirit is love. Before anyone can bear the fruit of the Spirit, they must first of all be grafted into the True Vine. It is impossible for the natural man to live a life of true biblical love before salvation. No one can bear pure spiritual fruit without first of all abiding in Christ. This is why Billy Graham preached the love of Jesus Christ to American soldiers in Vietnam. The vertical relationship with Jesus Christ must be established before changes can take place in the individual's horizontal relationships.

To accuse Graham of not preaching the gospel is the refusal to believe in the essentials for salvation as taught in the infallible Holy Scriptures. The bottom line is that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. We cannot do a single work, such as loving our enemy, to earn our salvation. Our own righteousness is that of filthy rags in the sight of a Holy God. Christ died for our sins and through our personal faith in him, we receive forgiveness and the gift of eternal life.

I do not place Billy Graham on a pedestal. Yet to print such an article the month following his receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor was a slap in the face to a man whom God has used in bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to untold millions. An apology is due to the Billy Graham Association for such false accusations.
Kent Norr, Berne, Ind.

Wayne Northey's article (May 28) speaks of love but emanates hostility. His theology is sloppy (There is no salvation outside the other? You mean in some other merely human person?) and his use of Scripture careless (Romans 5:6-11?). Most of all I object to what I consider a "demonization" of Billy Graham. (Just what is the purpose of the photo? An image of the enemy?) Northey is in good company. I heard a self-defined "separatist" also "demonize" Graham to me because Graham would relate to "liberals" and heretics (Catholics, nonfundamentalists, probably MCCers if he had known what they were.) I don't have to wholeheartedly embrace everything Graham does to see that this is not fair.

I also question the editorial choices of the staff of *The Mennonite.* This publication has attempted to remain open to varied discussion. We need open discussion, but it needs to be disciplined. Just being angry enough to call others names does not qualify one for a voice in the conference


Pontius' Puddle
I WONDER IF GOD CAN REALLY HEAR ME.
HEY, GOD! WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY LIFE?
FEED THE HUNGRY. RIGHT INJUSTICE. WORK FOR PEACE!
JUST TESTING!
SAME HERE.
© Joel Kauffmann

magazine. A reasoned, disciplined opinion on any aspect of belief should be accepted, even if it is controversial. Expressions that are more attacks than persuasive arguments should be left to the sensationalist press. Remarks that do not respect Christian morals on communication should be rejected. I can object to a particular view without being objectionable.

No doubt I have misunderstood Northey—at least I hope so. Having come from evangelical roots and retaining evangelical affinities even while being Mennonite, I find Northey's view distorted. I have often said, "Every person carries their own heresy with them," and I include myself in that assessment. Perhaps Northey ought to adopt dialogue rather than diatribe? With honest, open communication, we might all discover some things we could learn. *George O'Reilly, Carlock, Ill.*

GET INVOLVED IN COALITIONS

This is in response to "Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?" coverage by Mary E. Klassen of the Ron Sider presentation at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, March 14. This report (April 23 issue, page 18) is encouraging in that it reflects veritable discussion on the tough question of justice and environmental concerns. I commend *The Mennonite* for picking up on this highly relevant though unpopular subject.

I am disappointed, however, in Sider's answer to whether Jesus would join the Christian coalition. "Probably not," Sider is quoted as saying. I wonder whether the subjunctive approach to theology is at all helpful by positing such questions as "would Jesus" or "might Jesus." As those who are called to perpetuate the justice task of Jesus, we are compelled to do more than second-guess what Jesus might have or would have done. By praying and discerning together, the Christian church needs to be in a stance of risk-taking on justice issues.

As a Mennonite representative on several interchurch coalitions here in Canada that are concretely addressing justice issues that are of a political, environmental or business nature, I can only say that these are fruitful mechanisms for letting the Christian voice be heard. It is clear to me that the church's function is not to outsmart the government but to hold up a conscience to political actions. For contemporary Christians caught in a national ethos of ruthless resource extraction at the tremendous price of environmental demolition, it is time for the church to expand its theological scope to include custodianship of the earth. It is probably most timely that Christians in North America raise questions about production at all costs.

It is time for the church to expand its theological scope to include custodianship of the earth.

Since there are but a few in each denomination willing to take up the justice cause, it seems necessary to collaborate with Christians in other denominations in order to shore up solidarity that will furnish a basis for addressing injustices around us. Until Mennonites or other Christian groups find better mechanisms for addressing these justice issues, I am concerned that we do not withdraw from participation in coalitions in order to be theologically comfortable.

On his answer to the question, Ron Sider, the otherwise theologically venturesome theologian, is too cautious. I hope *The Mennonite* will continue to focus on veritable participation of the Mennonite witness in areas where we are entrusted to be present. Standing with the Innu regarding the militarization of their land in Labrador, participating in the negotiations of a controversial land claim in Little Buffalo in northern Alberta, and standing with the Kluskus Indian band near Williams Lake, B.C., regarding the protection of their forests are but a few concrete examples of Mennonite Central Committee's prophetic witness ventures. These too require in-depth theological reflection and reporting to the Mennonite constituency. *Menno Wiebe, MCC Canada Native Concerns, Winnipeg*

THE BABY WITH THE BATH WATER

Every feature article in the June 11 issue on worship, including Arthur Boers' commentary on the Orthodox Church, struck powerful chords with me, since I have been studying Orthodoxy and Catholicism for several months.

My studies have made me wonder if Anabaptists didn't throw out the baby with the bath water four centuries ago. That is, when they rejected the corruption that had come into the Roman Catholic Church, could Anabaptists have made a huge mistake in also rejecting the sacraments and liturgy that 15 centuries of Christians had believed in, dating all the way back to the apostles?

In 1 Corinthians 10:16 and 11:27-30, Paul makes it clear that Jesus' words at the Last Supper (Luke 22:19-20) were more than merely symbolic. The writings of the church fathers, including men personally appointed as successors by the apostles themselves, reveal that the earliest, first-century Christians believed that Jesus is indeed physically present in the Eucharist.

While I continue to be active in our local Mennonite church, participating in worship with my family and teaching children's Sunday school, I have begun attending Catholic Masses on my own. How can I not? They are, like the Orthodox liturgies described by Marlene Kropf and Arthur Boers, a preview of heaven. Not because of externals such as images or incense, but because of the liturgy—that rich tapestry woven of Scripture—and the incredible miracle of the Eucharist.

As a person with one foot in the Mennonite church and one in Catholicism/Orthodoxy, I look to the day when all Christians will be reunited.

As a person with one foot in the Mennonite church and one foot in Catholicism/Orthodoxy, I look to the day when all Christians will be reunited, and Jesus' prayer "that they may all be one" (John 17:21) will be fulfilled. *Kathy Collmer, Minneapolis, Kan.*

• •

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Write to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, fax (316) 283-0454, e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org.*

Speaking out

Pacifism: a Mennonite heresy?

Do we preach peace and fail to preach Christ?

Walfried Goossen

Wayne Northey's article ("When Evangelism Is a Heresy," May 28 issue, page 11) is a good example of why I believe Mennonite pacifism is often heretical. It has become a priority over the new birth teaching, an idol, a standard by which we measure all others.

Many people believe the Mennonite church is evangelical when in fact a great deal of our energy is spent discrediting (and distorting) the message of the most effective evangelicals and evangelists.

Two Mennonite myths need challenge: (1) Evangelicals are individualistic, while we are community minded and love our enemies. (2) "They" don't love their enemies.

Individualism in faith was certainly promoted by our Anabaptist forebears. They insisted that every individual must be baptized on confession of faith. Regeneration is not a group experience; Christian community is. The Bible gives many examples of people called individually—Nicodemus, Paul, many disciples, Zacchaeus—but they all came into the church community. Evangelists and evangelicals do not preach against community; on the contrary, they are more Anabaptist than many Mennonites.

Today's Mennonite pacifism is not a matter of conscience confessed by the Schleitheim conference. It has become a political tool in our church by which we discriminate against others and discredit Christians who disagree with us.

Yet half the eligible Mennonite men in North America enlisted in World War II. Many could never come home again because their home churches wouldn't permit it. They displayed their great love for the "enemy" by ostracizing them. Was their sin really going to war? No, it was marring the Mennonite pacifist image.

Dying soldiers: Some have claimed that to be seen by the enemy on the battlefield is to be identified with war and killing. How ludicrous. Neither the enemy nor "our" soldiers were aware of Mennonite pacifists who were not on the battlefield even to minister to dying soldiers of either side or to comfort young men who didn't want to be there either. More than a few of our people sat on their comfortable duffs and bought up land in British Columbia stolen from Japanese Canadians. Is it any wonder our Canadian and American communities were angered by our people's refusals even of alternative service in some cases?

Mennonite pacifism is often nothing but a self-serving rationale for protecting ourselves, an image we have sold to others.

Do we really think that as a church we were doing God's will by refusing comfort and ministry to people on the battlefield? Did Jesus not come to us all when we were yet sinners? Does the "enemy" deserve our love but our own soldiers do not? Is the enemy not also engaged in war yet more worthy than our own who go to war? Mennonite pacifism is often nothing but a self-serving rationale for protecting ourselves, an image we have sold to others. Schism is known as an Anabaptist disease. Is this not inconsistent?

I agree with pacifism when it teaches that killing and thus war is wrong. I do not agree when it benefits Mennonites materially and rejects the witness and faith of others. There is plenty in the Bible to negate our political pacifism. That other people have a different point of view does not make them heretics.

As for the evangelical witness to the enemy, Americans have invested more time and money in making Scriptures available to the enemy and feeding the defeated than any military power in history. In spite of the atrocities of war the U.S. church and government have been humane compared with most empires and victors in war. That is why German soldiers were eager to surrender to the Americans (and British) to escape the Russians.

Billy Graham has preached to almost every nation under the sun and has at least some converts in every one of them. A few of them, I am sure, have ended up in a Mennonite church.

Isn't it time we stopped hating our Christian brothers and sisters who disagree with us on some things and started preaching Christ instead of Mennonite pacifism with a bit of Christ?

Does our love for enemy give us license to accuse and hate our brothers and sisters in Christ? Pacifism should not be the price for membership in the Mennonite club or a reason for excluding believing people. When it does it becomes heresy.

In World War II, the Salvation Army, not the Mennonite church, was the most loved and respected church, because it was there to love, comfort and heal.

Walfried Goossen lives in Dundas, Ont.

RNS

Refusing ministry to people on the battlefield: *A U.S. soldier*

"Speaking Out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Form an investment club

Learning about the stock market can be fun when done with friends.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Are you confused by all the talk about great returns in the stock market? Do your friends tell you how last year their investments returned 30 percent or more, while you were earning 6 percent on your certificate of deposit?

In spite of the lure of higher returns, you may not be comfortable investing in stocks because you never have understood anything about the stock market and you are sure that you would lose your investment. Learning about how the stock market works can be intimidating, almost like learning a foreign language, because that's what the financial pages look like to you.

You don't have to be embarrassed by your ignorance any longer. You can learn all about investments, including the stock market, without feeling embarrassed. And all this learning can take place among your friends. You can all learn together.

For years people have been meeting in small groups known as investment clubs. Today there are more than 20,000 official investment clubs, with thousands of individuals participating and more than 600 new clubs being formed each month.

Investment clubs are established with several goals. One, of course, is to make investments, but another is to learn more about investing and the risks and rewards with the corresponding investments. People also form investment clubs to have fun and be with friends.

Investment clubs can be as few as three or as many as 50 people who want to get together periodically. You don't have to invest a lot of money each time. Investment clubs decide independently how much members will invest, and clubs often start out with each person investing as little as $25 a month.

A lot of fun: One of the most interesting stories about investment clubs is a book entitled *The Beardstown Ladies Common-Sense Investment Guide.* The book tells the story of a group of women from Beardstown, Ill., who wanted to learn more about investments and decided to form an investment club. Not only have they had a lot of fun, but they have gained knowledge of the stock market as well. Most impressive is the fact that over a 10-year period their investments have earned an annualized rate of return exceeding 23 percent, which far outpaces the return of the stock market. Here is a group of nonprofessional investors who have done far better than most professionally trained investment managers.

From *The Beardstown Ladies* book

Knowledge of stock market: *The Beardstown ladies*

To help interested people get started in forming investment clubs, you can request information from the National Association of Investment Corporation. The NAIC is a not-for-profit organization that assists individuals and clubs. The organization has developed educational material that helps club members evaluate stocks and manage club portfolios. Once the club is formed and is a member of the NAIC, there is material to help the clubs keep on track. Membership dues to the NAIC are reasonable at $35 per club and $11 for each member. Dues-paying members receive the organization's monthly magazine, *Better Investing*, which provides educational information and investment tips.

Since the idea is to invest as a team, successful clubs are usually made up of people who have something in common. They may all attend the same Sunday school class, work together, or share other common interests. The group should enjoy getting together at least monthly in a social setting to discuss investments and share a common commitment to long-term investing. It is not a get-rich-quick scheme. Investment clubs are for people who want to invest for the long-term. Clubs soon dissolve if some of the members want to buy and sell based on short-term ups and downs of the market.

The emphasis is on group decision making. This can be beneficial since each person may bring a certain perspective to the discussion. Normally each member is assigned to follow a specific stock, whether it is one in the portfolio or one that is being considered to be added. The group can also struggle with socially responsible investing issues. Does the particular company produce products or services that are incompatible with what we believe and practice?

The Beardstown Ladies Common-Sense Investment Guide is especially helpful in understanding the process because it was written by people who have had experience with an investment club. While most of the people in the club knew little about the stock market when they began, they all had a keen interest in learning more about how one should make good investment decisions. An additional outcome was their realization that serious financial and retirement planning is a part of life. It doesn't have to be boring or intimidating when you work at these issues with friends. It's obvious that their friendships deepened during the process as well.

For information on starting an investment club or joining NAIC as an individual, call (810) 583-6242, or write the organization at NAIC, P.O. Box 220, Royal Oak, MI 48068.

News

Music breaks barriers for inmates

"I dream of a world where all will know sweet freedom's way."
—Langston Hughes

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Elvera Voth has prepared choruses for noted conductors such as Robert Shaw. She has even directed choirs in locations as remote as northeastern Russia. But if Voth could choose a concert to relive, it would be the one she conducted recently at Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan., that included singers from a state prison.

On June 2, more than 200 people packed the church to hear eight men from the minimum security unit of the Lansing (Kan.) Correctional Facility sing in a men's chorus. Works ranged from Gregorian chant to Schubert to the traditional spiritual "There Is a Balm in Gilead."

Karl Wenger

Elvera Voth

The inmates, who wore blue work shirts with jeans, were joined by 11 men from the Rainbow Church, three musicians from the Kansas City Lyric Opera and two Mennonite choral conductors—Marles Preheim, North Newton, Kan., and Don Peters, Henderson, Neb. The event was a benefit for Crosslines, a nondenominational charity.

Voth retired to Kansas City 18 months ago after 35 years in Alaska, where she founded the music department at the University of Alaska Anchorage, the Anchorage Opera and the Alaska Chamber Singers. She is the chorus master of the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Utah Festival Opera.

She initiated the prison project last October, traveling 60 miles two to three times each week to practice with the inmates at the Lansing Correctional Facility. Though few of the men could read music, she taught them songs with lyrics in German, Latin and Spanish, as well as English. (See the related article on page 14.)

Voth says that during the June 2 concert she caught herself thinking that it was funny in some ways to be making her conducting debut in Kansas with a concert far less polished than her usual work.

But the human dimension made it an extraordinary experience for her. "Can you imagine what it must be like for the inmates to receive this kind of affirmation, when you have been told all your life that you are worthless?" she says.

The audience, which included prison administrators, families of the inmates, and church members, were moved to tears at times, particularly during the solos of two of the inmates, one of whom had grown up within three blocks of the church.

"It was poignant in many ways. The [group] was so different, but we were able to meet on the same turf," says Preheim, who had been a student of Voth's at Freeman (S.D.) Junior Academy in the late 1940s. "Music is a universal language. It can speak to everybody." His son Brian, who is from the Rainbow Church, also participated in the chorus.

Accompanist Roseann Kaufman agrees that the beauty of the event was the manner in which it "brought people together who would have never gathered together."

During the performance, one inmate shared how much it meant that the Rainbow Church men had practiced with them in the prison. He then turned to Voth and said, "We appreciate you so much. You give us new life inside those prison fences."

> ***"You give us new life inside those prison fences."***
>
> **Inmate to Elvera Voth**

At the end of the concert, the audi-

continued on next page

Inside the news

Kansas has chorus instead of chain gang / p. 14

Hispanic Anabaptists meet to combine gifts / p. 15

Conference finds that conflict marks Menno history / p. 16

Youth ministers enriched by dynamic teacher / p. 17

European Mennos consider future of church / p. 18

Commentary: Project builds racial awareness, new church / p. 18

A commission of the Norwegian Ministry of Family Affairs has proposed that army draftees should spend one month of their duty time in a kindergarten or other similar social institution, in order to address the "disastrous shortage of adult males" in nursery schools and to challenge the "Rambo image" of the military. Soldiers can learn to care for children instead of military violence. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

• • •

Lara Hall, an editor at Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa., has been named executive secretary of the Mennonite Church's Women's Missionary and Service Commission. She replaces Marian Brendle Hostetler, who announced her resignation effective Sept. 1. Search committee chair Pat Swartzendruber cited Hall's vision for WMSC and her belief that WMSC's merger with the General Conference Women in Mission organization is a top priority. Because of the pending merger, Hall was appointed to a three-year term or until WMSC ceases to exist, whichever comes first. Hall is a graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. She has been at MPH since 1993, developing and editing youth curriculum and serving as assistant editor for *Adult Bible Study Guide*. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

ence responded with a standing ovation.

The event was followed by a potluck meal consisting of Kansas City-style barbecue, which had been requested by the inmates, and dishes prepared by Rainbow Church members.

"Over the years, I've been involved with many wonderful musical events," says Voth. "But this one was unique because there were so many layers of emotions involved. This event changed my life. I hope it changed others, too." *Carla Reimer*

Riverdale Mennonite Church in Millbank, Ont., marked its 50th anniversary July 5-7. The theme for the weekend was "Celebrating God's Faithfulness." The congregation planted trees in memory of members who have died, and it prepared a history book for sale. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

The Mennonite **received the following awards from the Evangelical Press Association for work published in 1995: second place in poetry for "Chicken Guts" by Jean Janzen (Sept. 12 issue); fourth place for a cover on church growth by designer and art director John Hiebert (Nov. 28 issue), and fifth place for the column "Learning to Pray" by Marlene Kropf. The EPA gave first place to *With* magazine in the fiction category for "Dreams" by Nancy N. Rue, and fourth place in the biblical exposition category for "Friends with Jesus" by Suzanne and Leia Lawrence. *With,* a magazine for youth, is published by the General Conference Mennonite Church. (*GCMC News Service*)**

• • •

Michael Jay Hofkamp, North Newton, Kan., died May 30 of cancer. Hofkamp, 34, served 11 years with Mennonite Central Committee in Miami, Minneapolis, Denver and the Philippines. At the time of his death, he was an adjunct faculty member in the global studies department at Bethel College, North Newton. He was a member of First Mennonite Church of Denver and attended Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Kansas has chorus instead of chain gang

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—"Alabama has chain gangs; Kansas has an inmate chorus," says Elvera Voth.

From October 1995 through May of this year, she spent a minimum of two evenings a week conducting such a choir at the Lansing (Kan.) Correctional Facility.

So it's no surprise to hear her unequivocal declaration that music is a natural and effective rehabilitation tool.

Singing in a choral group helps build self-esteem in a population that desperately needs it, she says. "When you sing in a chorus, you become more than your own voice. You can't believe how good it sounds."

A chorus also gives inmates the chance to be part of a project with long-range goals—rare in prison settings, she says.

Everyone is striving for the same goals in a chorus. "They have to work as a whole group, otherwise the chorus will sound bad. That means they learn community accountability."

> ***"Half the men left at intermission when they saw I was not a rocker or a rapper."***
>
> **Elvera Voth**

While she has to chosen to work with an inmate population, Voth also sympathizes with crime victims. She has supported an organization that helps battered children and women.

Yet, she says, "the prison population is here among us. Our only hope in helping them become effective members of society is through education. That's what I am doing by having an inmate chorus."

About 30 men from the minimum security unit came to the first practice in October 1995. Half left at intermission "when they saw I was not a rocker or a rapper," Voth says.

The number dwindled to eight as inmates were transferred to other institutions, paroled or, in a couple of cases, moved back to the maximum security unit.

Although few of the men could read music, Voth refused to "talk down" to them. She told them she would, for the most part, treat them like any other choral group.

"I said, 'I'm not going to tell you to make the music louder; I'm going to say, crescendo,'" she recalls.

"When I was teaching them the Gregorian chant, I told them that this ancient music is a part of us; it is in our bones," she says.

To her surprise, she found that once the inmates had claimed a song as their own, they closed their eyes when they sang it, as if to block out their surroundings. "I never had that happen to me before as a conductor," she says.

Voth found that in helping show the inmates their potential, her life was touched as well.

At a June 6 meeting she had with them, one inmate, a fan of Broadway musicals, told her, "I've grown accustomed to your face" (a line from a song in *My Fair Lady*).

That pretty much sums up why she is looking forward to another season with "the Lansing men" this fall. *Carla Reimer*

Hispanic Anabaptists meet to combine gifts

Miami (Meetinghouse)—Hispanic leaders have long dreamed of a gathering of North American Hispanic Anabaptists spanning denominational and national backgrounds.

The dream came true when some 110 Hispanic church leaders met here May 2-4 for the "First Encounter of Ibero-American Anabaptists in North America."

Six groups—General Conference Mennonite Church, Amor Viviente churches, Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Convention of Puerto Rico—and 5,000 to 6,000 Hispanic Anabaptists in more than 100 North American congregations were represented. National origins stretched from Mexico to Argentina, from Puerto Rico to Colombia.

Though crammed with agenda, the two days of meetings were upbeat and lively. Participants energetically discussed and shared opinions, even on potentially divisive issues.

They came under a banner of "unity and renewal." Unity proved the order of the day, as delegates approved creation of an association of Hispanic Anabaptists of North America.

The association—to have an executive committee of two representatives from each denomination—will work together on common concerns, from such practical matters as Sunday school curriculum to loftier questions of "prophetic discernment of mission outreach" to potentially thorny theological issues such as men's and women's roles in church and home.

Hispanic leaders will ask for support and assistance in nurturing this new initiative from Mennonite Central Committee U.S., whose staff helped plan the Miami consultation.

> ***"Among us are men and women with tremendous gifts and abiilities."***
>
> **Victor Amador**

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ... A threefold cord is not quickly broken." Victor Amador quoted these verses from Ecclesiastes in a reflection titled "Unity."

An Amor Viviente pastor and leader, Amador said, "We all have different gifts; if we put them together and rejoice in what is happening in the different groups, then nothing can hold back the Spirit's work.

"Material riches are important but

icanos en Norte
ción

Emily Will

Working together: *Jose Ortiz, professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., and Rosa Sierra, a school counselor and pastor's wife from Puerto Rico, take part in a panel presentation on "Challenges: How to Work Together—Theology, Missions, Collaboration" at the first gathering of North American Hispanic Anabaptists, May 2-4.*

An estimated 30,000 Christians participated in the Winnipeg March for Jesus on May 25. It was the largest of the Canadian gatherings. About 15,000 marched in Vancouver, with 11,000 in Toronto and 5,000 in Edmonton. (*Christian Week*)

• • •

Grace Mennonite Church, St. Catharines, Ont., celebrated its 40th anniversary June 1-2. Special events included an art display, talent show, fund-raising "shave-off" in which church leaders' beards faced the razor, and sale of an anniversary cookbook. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

A graduating class numbering 45 reflected the upward trend in enrollment at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in the past several years. Jonathan Larson, Mennonite missionary to Botswana from 1981-1994 and currently interim pastor of Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta, Ga., addressed graduates at May 24 commencement exercises. Larson based his remarks on Jesus' words from John 12—"Unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and dies, it remains a single grain"—telling stories from the Bible and his own mission experiences of "descent into darkness" and "rising to fruitfulness." Fourteen women and 31 men graduated, with 23 receiving the Master of Divinity degree, 16 the Master of Arts in theological studies, five the Master of Arts in peace studies and one a certificate in theological studies. Countries represented in the graduating class included Argentina, Canada, Colombia, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland, Taiwan and the United States.

Mennonite Reporter reports that the Canadian women's volleyball team, bound for the Olympics in Atlanta this summer, includes three Mennonites. Michelle Sawatzky and Tara MacIntyre attend The Meeting Place, a Mennonite Brethren congregation in Winnipeg, while Christine Stark comes from Crestview Fellowship, an Evangelical Mennonite Conference church, also in Winnipeg. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Just after First Mennonite Church of McPherson, Kan., celebrated its 50th anniversary, pastor Mathew Swora got a phone call from Leadwood, Mo. "Your missing cornerstone has been found," said the voice on the other end. But no one at the church knew the cornerstone was missing. There were no holes in the building and, furthermore, the "new" First Mennonite Church building, erected in 1964 after a fire destroyed the old one, had what was thought to be the only original cornerstone in it. "It's got to be yours—it says 'First Mennonite Church,'" the voice insisted. Such a name is not unique, of course —but the dates on the stone were 1946 (when construction of the first church building was begun) and October 1949 (when it was completed). Fern Goering, wife of First Mennonite Church's first pastor, Roland Goering, brought over a photo of the original building. Sure enough, there were two cornerstones—the one incorporated into the second building and the one discovered 400 miles away in Missouri. The Leadwood chief of police had found it in a shed while tracking down stolen property. Someone at the Missouri State Historical Society got in touch with the Mennonite Library and Archives in Goshen, Ind., which matched the dates on the stone to First Mennonite of McPherson. Two members traveled to Leadwood to pick up the stone and bring it back "home." (*First Mennonite Church News and Views* and *Mennonite Weekly Review*)

more important are spiritual riches, and we have an incredible bank of spiritual riches," he continued. "Among us are men and women with tremendous gifts and abilities, and if we decide to work together, we can accomplish much."

Samuel Lopez, in a presentation on Anabaptist history and theology, encapsulated Anabaptist pacifist belief: If Jesus Christ, as God's maximum revelation, carried out God's will, then if we follow him, we will also be doing God's will.

"It's so simple … yet takes such commitment," said Lopez, president of the North American Mennonite Hispanic Convention. *Emily Will*

Conflict marks Menno history, conference finds

Goshen—Conflict more than consensus marks Mennonite history, says a group of Anabaptist scholars. Furthermore, conflict isn't bad, they conclude.

Discord can be a sign of life, Arnold Snyder told participants in "Mennonites and Conflict: New Directions in Scholarship,"a research seminar held June 6-8 at Goshen (Ind.) College. "It shows the patient has a pulse."

So long as Mennonites have a core of values to serve as a melody, good debate is like good jazz, with everyone building variations on a theme, Snyder, associate professor of history at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., added.

The seminar brought together graduate students and professors in the fields of history, sociology and communication throughout the United States and Canada. Most were from Anabaptist backgrounds and all study the Anabaptist movement, whether they teach at church-related schools, other private colleges or public institutions.

The idea of conflict being helpful is new to many, said Beulah Hostetler, an independent scholar from Pennsylvania. "Some of us have to turn our minds around a few times to get to that," she said. "I'm almost there."

The seminar challenged much of what is central to being Mennonite, said Fred Kniss, associate professor of sociology at Loyola University-Chicago. Mennonites traditionally see themselves as having clear convictions and solid boundaries between church and world, he said, but are actually more likely to be in near-continual conflict, influencing and being influenced by society.

Dropping our "historical placidness" might put a new perspective on debates over the place of homosexuals in congregations and merger of the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church, Kniss said. "Viewing conflict as normal and consensus with suspicion could affect how we look at contemporary social questions."

As a double-edged sword, conflict can construct or consume, said Tom Meyers, Goshen College professor of sociology. When some boundaries are torn down, others are built up, leading to new consensus. The role of rural and urban influences, class, language, history, psychology, theology and rhetoric must all be examined, he added.

Snyder, a specialist in 16th century history, said this seminar put him in a time warp: "I was about 400 years out of date."

Even from his vantage point, however, Mennonite history is not peaceable. "The question is why conflict hasn't been studied as conflict," Snyder said. There is a tendency to deny conflict because it is seen as opposing Mennonite ideals of unity and peace.

"Mennonite history is not peaceable."

Arnold Snyder

Consensus and conflict may clash, said Stephen Ainlay of Holden, Mass., dean of Holy Cross College. There has been reluctance to talk about the role of charismatic leaders and the egos of those who have wielded power.

The seminar was built around a paper by Ainlay and Kniss titled "Mennonites and Conflict: Re-examining Mennonite History and Contemporary Life." Another 11 academics tested the argument, using as case studies events such as weddings, publications, college closings and formation of churches.

Many of the papers will be published in a special issue of *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, tentatively set for October 1997. *Wayne Steffen*

Youth ministers enriched by dynamic teacher

Winnipeg (CMBC)—"Not only two thumbs up, but also two arms up and voices screaming 'Amen!'"

That was Randy Hildebrandt's assessment of a six-day "Youth and Family Ministry" course taught at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) May 27-June 1. Hildebrandt is youth minister at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church.

"This course was one of the most inspiring sessions I have ever participated in for professional development," says Monica Pries Klassen, associate youth pastor at Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church. "I wish I could have known these things when I started my youth ministry position. I hope I can still incorporate some of the ideas into my current ministry."

The 30 participants met six hours a day. Presenter Roland Martinson held their attention with his creative use of small groups, storytelling and chalkboard.

"Every day he asked me for more chalk," says Abe Bergen, instructor in youth ministry at CMBC. The seminar was the fulfillment of Bergen's dream for a class in youth ministry.

Martinson, professor of pastoral care and counseling at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., described youth ministry as a task that includes the entire family. In a presentation on family systems theory, he gave four reasons why youth ministry should also be considered family ministry:

1. A family can undo the major contributions of a positive faith community.

2. A family is a major center for molding life and values.

3. We are shaped by our families of origin and need to understand that impact.

> ***"This course has revolutionized my views of youth ministry."***
>
> **Seminar participant**

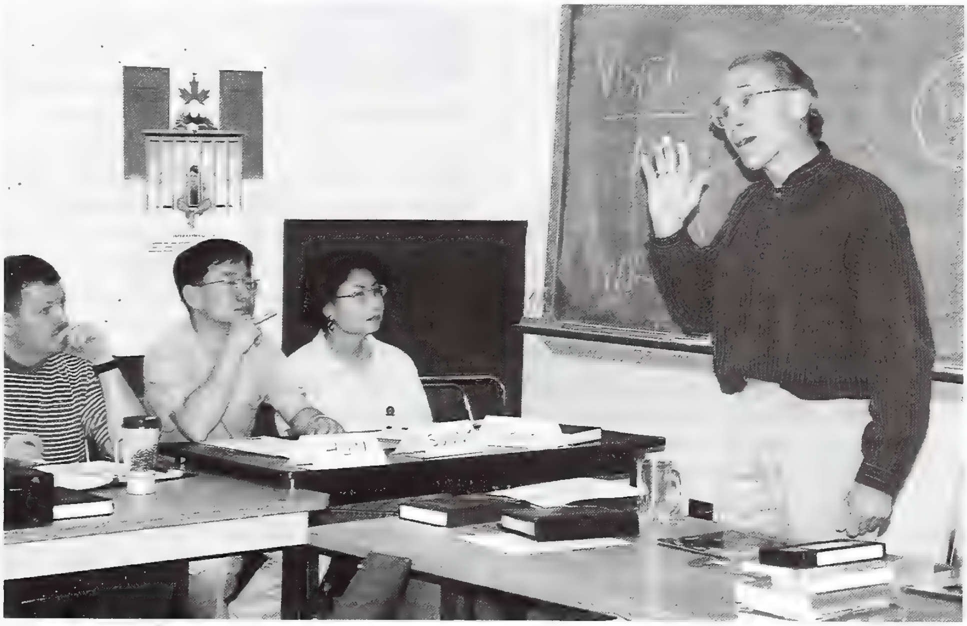
4. Family is one way of understanding how the church functions.

The broader focus on ministry led one student to conclude, "This is a youth ministry course that all senior pastors should have attended."

"This course has revolutionized my views of youth ministry," another added. "I thought I was getting too old for it. Now I realize I have just begun."

Participants in the course came primarily from Mennonite congregations, but United, Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Baptist churches were also represented.

Bergen is already dreaming about the future. When asked if a similar course will be offered next year, he says with a smile and a twinkle in his eye, "Absolutely." *Doug Klassen*



Wendy Janzen

More chalk: *Roland Martinson of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., held the attention of youth ministers at a six-day intensive workshop at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg with creative use of storytelling, small group work and chalkboard.*

The Iowa Mennonite Relief Sale, held May 24-25 at the Johnson County Fairgrounds in Iowa City, raised $143,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. A livestock sale on May 27 yielded another $7,900. Seven of the 111 quilts auctioned sold for more than $1,000 each. Top quilt price was $1,425. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Because of the "mad cow" disease scare and subsequent ban on overseas sales of British beef, dairy farmer Harry Goode had to think of some way to profit from older cows he could no longer sell. So he turned them into walking billboards, mounting ads on the animals where they grazed beside the busy M42 highway outside Birmingham, England. His first customer was Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, and others are lining up to buy "cow space" at about $40 U.S. per animal per week. (*Newsweek*)

• • •

"What Mean These Stones?" was the title of a one-day seminar on learning from aboriginal traditions, held May 27 at Herschel, Sask. The seminar was sponsored by Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the Christian Service Committee of the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan and the Herschel Interpretive Centre. Norma Jean Dubray-Byrd of Regina talked about leading a holistic life. Terry Widrick, Selkirk, Man., of CMC Native Ministries discussed the Scriptures and Native spirituality. The Duck Lake Creeland Dancers helped provide cultural and spiritual celebration through dance. There were also tours to the "talking rocks"—ancient aboriginal petroglyphs, or rock carvings—near the Interpretive Centre, and an evening banquet of bannock, buffalo and venison with all the trimmings. (*Intotemak* and *Mennonite Reporter*)

Two groups of quilters met together recently. Not an unusual scenario among Mennonites—except that one of the groups came from the Kingston (Ont.) Prison for Women. Ruth Hess of Kingston Mennonite Fellowship taught a quilting class in the prison, in which about 12 women appliqued blocks of colorful butterflies. The St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church Women's Missionary and Service Commission group quilted the blocks, then traveled to the prison to meet the women who had pieced them. Hess says the butterflies on the finished quilt symbolize freedom. (*WMSC Voice*)

• • •

Two Old Order Amish couples were forced to defend their traditional practices in court, reports the Kitchener-Waterloo (Ont.) *Record*. Murray and Elizabeth Kuepfer and Carl and Anita Wagler were charged by the township of Newton, Ont., with breaking a bylaw that prohibits livestock in a residential zone. Both couples kept horses for personal transportation in barns beside their houses in Newton. The justice of the peace ruled that the Newton bylaw was an unconstitutional violation of the Amish right to religious freedom. The judge also hinted that Ontario's land use guidelines may be unconstitutional as well, as they force young Old Order Amish off their families' farms and pressure them to sacrifice their religious traditions. When Wagler decided to marry, he could not get a parcel of land severed from his father's farm for his own family, so the young couple, with their horse, settled in the hamlet of Newton. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

European Mennos consider future of church

Elspeet, Netherlands (Meetinghouse)—Cold weather chilled body but not spirit May 16-19 at Mennorode, a Dutch Mennonite retreat center here, where more than 800 European Mennonites met for inspiration and mutual encouragement.

Dutch Mennonites hosted Mennonitische Europaische Regionalkonferenz (MERK). The theme was "500 Years After Menno Simons: On the Way to God's Future." The last MERK gathering was in France in 1993.

A busload of Aussiedler (recent emigrants from the former Soviet Union) came from Bielefeld, Germany, for one day, the first time these Mennonites have participated in MERK. An additional 1,100 Dutch Mennonites attended the Sunday service.

A large tent was set up on the soccer field for the common assemblies. Unexpectedly cold weather made sitting in the tent a test of stamina the first three days, while beautiful sunshine heating it up on Sunday caused one participant to faint.

This discomfort was more than compensated for by the fellowship, and music led by two singers and a brass quartet.

The Sunday afternoon program included a cabaret by the ministers of the Haarlem and Amsterdam churches. They presented the Mennonite past in sketch and song, using as the main character an aged Menno reflecting on his life and all that had happened. Camerata Trajectina gave a concert of Mennonite and Dutch music of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Another highlight was baptism of a Romanian participant by immersion during the conference.

Conference subthemes of "Choosing," "Service and Suffering" and "Comfort and Hope" were presented in speeches, skits by children and youth, music and discussion groups. Prayer groups met after breakfast with afternoons devoted to workshops and excursions.

A quilt exhibition demonstrated the creative possibilities of this art form, which has become something of a rage here in recent years. Included were some "antique quilts" sent by Mennonite Central Committee to refugees who ended up in the Netherlands after World War II.

The majority of participants were from the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. Other countries represented included France, Belgium, England, Spain, Portugal, Finland, Russia, Ukraine, former Yugoslavia, Romania, the United States and Canada. *Lydia Penner*

COMMENTARY

Project builds racial awareness, new church

Boligee, Ala (MCC)—Just past Tuscaloosa, on my way to Boligee, I hear on the radio that another black church has burned down. That makes 30 in one year. Three Baptist churches near this small, rural town have fallen to the flames.

Mennonite Disaster Service agreed to coordinate the rebuilding effort at Mt. Zoar Baptist, the congregation with the fewest financial resources of those burned in the area. I am here to do some racism awareness training with the MDS team.

Miller Shearer

I arrive at the worksite in the midst of a torrential downpour. Water gathers on the red clay packed around the newly-laid block foundation. I am reminded that this earth sticking to my shoes has never been easy to till. Sharecroppers knew this 50 years ago, the Choctaw and other Native peoples long before that. This land holds history like the clay holds water.

MDS has set up a small village here. Seven trailers will house the long-term team of nine and the youth groups who will assist the rebuilding project this summer. Their presence probably more than triples the population in the immediate area. Three decades ago that would not have been the case.

After voting rights were fully realized nearly 30 years earlier, white landowners expelled the black sharecroppers. The only thing they were allowed to leave were the church buildings they owned. Physically separated from their congregations, the sites remain deeply significant to the church members, both culturally and religiously. Whoever burned Mt. Zoar—whether in drunken spite or calculated hate—may have known this history. They apparently forgot, however, that the real church can't be destroyed by flames.

Entering the main MDS trailer, I find a meeting under way. Arthur Coleman, Mt. Zoar's pastor, and MDS personnel discuss details of funding, construction and coordination. Control of project finances and design remains securely in the hands of Coleman and deacon Bobby Davis.

"That was a very deliberate decision on our part," says MDS program coordinator Tom Smucker. "There's no question that we're coming in here as a powerful white organization. Giving up some of the control helps even out the power imbalance a bit."

After supper with the long-term team, I ask what makes this project different. The remoteness? The man-made nature of the disaster? The local mix of politics made more volatile by the burnings and considerable national attention paid to the area?

> ***"We've never even thought about our white privilege while doing other service projects in this community. I think it's about time."***
>
> **A local Mennonite**

"It's the media," says advance team member Art Smucker.

Other members of the team nod and launch into stories of encounters with the media. They have already been visited by local newspaper and radio journalists as well as a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* and a TV crew from a national network. [Editor's note: *A story about MDS work in Boligee appeared on the front page of* USA Today, *June 14.*]

During team training the next day, we spend a lot of time talking about how to respond to the media—what to say, how to say it, who will do the talking. So far both the coverage itself and local response have been positive.

"They keep asking us why we're doing this," chuckles construction foreman Virgil Kauffman. "They can't quite figure us out."

Despite the warm reception by both whites and blacks in Boligee—attested to repeatedly by all team members—there remains the possibility, however slight, of further violence. Team members discuss how best to respond should something unexpected happen. Some nervous laughter ripples through the group. The discussion quickly turns serious.

I detect no glory-seeking in the MDS group. They know the true risk-takers and heroes in this story are the members of Mt. Zoar. MDS staff will eventually go home. Mt. Zoar folk are here to stay.

Jane Kuepfer and her husband, J.D., will coordinate the youth activities here this summer. She compares the project to a resurrection of sorts.

"It's the church rebuilding the church," she says.

Sparkling on the land around this Mt. Zoar resurrection site are catfish ponds too numerous to count. Each Wednesday night, members of the congregation will prepare supper for the MDS volunteers with the bounty from these ponds. Maybe a time for sharing stories will follow.

As I leave the worksite, I wonder what will result from these catfish meals. Racism will not end. The church building will not be completed any sooner. Stereotypes held by white youth might be challenged, but not necessarily—brief exposure does not always produce more open minds.

But our church and society have too few opportunities for authentic mutual exchange across racial lines. These meals offer a possibility for change.

As I leave, gobs of red clay stick to my shoes. The words of one of the local white Mennonites participating in the MDS team training stick, too.

"I've been here 30 years, and this is something new. We've never even thought about our white privilege while doing other service projects in this community. I think it's about time." *Jody Miller Shearer*

Check us out at our web site:

http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

Flood waters in Manitoba's Red River Valley at the end of April reached the highest levels since 1979. Most properties had been raised or protected with ring dykes after the last major flood. However, bridges and roads were washed away and telephone service interrupted. A Mennonite Disaster Service call for help through churches and local media yielded an estimated 200 volunteers a day in Rosenort at the time the flood was expected to peak. Volunteers were also sent to St. Adolphe. MDS coordinator Jake L. Dueck guessed that volunteers filled about 40,000 sandbags in the Rosenort area alone, with a much larger operation taking place in St. Adolphe. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Erie Neighborhood House in Chicago's West Town, a predominantly low-income neighborhood, is offering free computer classes to poor residents, reports former Mennonite Voluntary Service worker Kent Unruh, director of the new Technology Center. The Center, funded by a three-year Urban Leadership Award from the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, is dedicated to computer literacy for West Town residents. Language barriers, limited or poorly coordinated computer resources and high cost of computer equipment all contribute to lack of computer knowledge among low-income Hispanic West Towners, says Unruh, putting them at even more of a disadvantage in the emerging information age. The Technology Center has a completely furnished computer lab and offers a series of introductory classes, internet access to computer students and an internship program for lab assistants.

Record

The 12th Believers' Church Conference will be hosted by McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ont., Oct. 17-18. The title is "The Believers' Church: A Voluntary Church." The 20 presenters and panel members include Leo Driedger of the University of Manitoba; Leland Harder, emeritus faculty of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; Scott Holland, Church of the Brethren minister; A. James Reimer of Conrad Grebel College, and Brian Stiller, executive director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. The registration fee of $40 Cdn. ($20 for students) is due by Sept. 16 to Believers' Church Conference, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, ON L8S 4KI. For more information, call (905) 525-9140, ext. 24685, fax (905) 577-4782, or e-mail bellousk@mcmaster.ca or http.// www.macmaster.ca/divinity.

• • •

A Washington neighborhood that saw 75 violent drug-related crimes as well as more than a dozen homicides in three months, got a taste of a different kind of activity recently. Christian Peacemaker Teams, along with Sojourners Neighborhood Center, Mennonite Board of Missions' Voluntary Service program and the University of the District of Columbia, set up a peace fair at the UDC's Harvard Street campus. More than 500 people from church, school and community groups attended the five days of events. Highlights included the Peace Factory, an interactive display that was set up at the joint assembly of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church last summer in Wichita, Kan.; Peace Troupe trainings focused on nonviolent techniques for responding to conflict; music from local talent, and food booths. (*CPT*)

DEATH

Robert M. Landis died May 1 at age 79. He served as pastor at Springfield Church, Quakertown, Pa. (1951-1961); Pine Grove Church, Bowmansville, Pa. (1961-1984) and as chaplain for the Frederick (Pa.) Mennonite Home for 24 years. He also served as president of Eastern District Conference and as a member of the EDC's missions and ministerial committees.

MINISTERS

Delmer and **Elsie Epp** will become co-pastors at East Zorra Church, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 15.

Beryl Jantzi has resigned as co-pastor at Akron (Pa.) Church. He will become pastor at Harrisonburg (Va.) Church beginning in the fall.

Scott Miller was ordained as assistant pastor at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship June 16.

David Ruby will become pastor at MacGregor (Man.) Bergthaler Church Sept. 1.

WORKERS

Mary Brubaker-Zehr has been appointed dean of students at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.

Doug Dirks, Akron, Pa., has been appointed director of Self-Help Crafts Canada. He replaces **Alvin Martin**.

John D. Schmidt, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., received the Kansas Department of Corrections Volunteer of the Year award and a similar award from Hutchinson (Kan.) Correctional Facility. He has been visiting inmates there since 1973.

Elsie Sheriff, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., has resigned as director of sales and customer relations for Faith & Life Press, for health-related reasons.

Need a new pastor?
Want to sell your book?
Advertise here and be connected with thousands of Mennonites.
For ad rate information, contact Melanie A. Zuercher at (316) 283-5100.
E-mail melaniez@gcmc.org

GOING TO...
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE
India
1997

TourMagination offers two tours that include
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE:

Adventure to India .... Dec. 28, 1996 – Jan. 17, 1997
Adventure to India & Indonesia .... Jan. 1-23, 1997

Call 1-800-565-0451 today for a brochure or to make a reservation.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
Reg. #1567624
1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960

Are your retirement investments rooted in your values?

Roots are unseen, but they find their expression in the light of day.

Same with living your beliefs, such as investing your hard-earned retirement money according to your values.

That's the reason for MMA Praxis Mutual Funds. With MMA Praxis, you can get an IRA that invests in enterprises that enhance peace, justice, and the quality of human life. An IRA that can really express your values.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

MMA

Akron Mennonite Church is seeking an **associate pastor**, beginning any time after August. The associate pastor works closely with the pastor and a lay pastoral team. Approximately 50 percent of the time will be devoted to pastoral care of and ministry with youth, young adults and children. The other half will include general pastoral service, preaching, Christian education resourcing and small-group work, all shared with the pastor. M.Div. preferred and experience required.

Inquiries can be directed to: **Search Committee Chairperson, Akron Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 208, Akron, PA 17501; fax (717) 859-3942.**

Pastor required for a **rural GC Mennonite Church (MCEC)** with a 65-member congregation of all ages, commencing this fall. Located on the north shore of Lake Erie, our community caters to tourists and sportsmen. Congregational Information Form available on request.

Please contact: **Search Committee, Erie View United Mennonite Church, c/o John D. Wiebe, R.R. #3, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0; (519) 586-7277 collect.**

MVS
SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Mentoring Coordinator
Saskatoon, SK

Social Worker
St. Louis, MO

Tutoring Program Coordinator
Kansas City, KS

Office Coordinator
San Francisco, CA

Mennonite Voluntary Service
PO Box 347 Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

House for rent, Hesston, Kan., 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, finished basement, fireplace, stove and refrigerator. CH/CA, large yard, well, garage. Well-maintained home. Available Sept. 1; $650, deposit and reference. **(316) 283-2854.**

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church is in need of a **pastor**.

Interested candidates please direct inquiries to **John Taves (e-mail): Eileen_Taves@Mindlink.bc.ca** or to **Abe Olfert, (604) 859-4575; (fax) (604) 854-4320.** Resumes may be sent to: **West Abbotsford Mennonite Church Search Committee, 31216 King Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6C2.**

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has openings for a **biology instructor, Spanish instructor** (70 percent), and a **director of alumni relations** (50 percent).

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Director of business affairs—Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Experience with business office functions, computer operations and personnel supervision is required.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D., invites applications for a full-time **director** to begin Sept. 1. Seeking couple or single person. Salary set according to conference guidelines.

Please send resume to **Dave Waldowski, 2213 S. Oxford Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106; (605) 361-2514 or (605) 336-9189.**

Reviews

MUSIC

SONGS DEEP WITH FAITH

Wonder and Blue *by Rick Unruh (WoodBridge Productions, 1996, CD)*

Reviewed by Michael Bade, Akron, Pa.

If you are looking for a pleasant recording the whole family can listen to, let me recommend *Wonder and Blue* by Rick Unruh. Unruh has a soft yet expressive voice backed on most songs by the gentle harmonies of Jennifer Mierau.

The recording emphasizes acoustic guitar, percussion and voice.

Unruh's lyrics are wonderful in the way you can go back to them and get more each time you listen. These are songs deep with faith yet not hitting you over the head with cliche or platitudes. For example,

"She always said, 'Stand tall in the wind'
Speak your mind, you know where you've been
When the gale force blows never give in
Cling to the truth like you cling to your skin
And add your voice to the holy din
Be marching when those saints go rolling in
Counted with the one who can say 'I tried.'"

Some of the songs are personal and confessional, like "Innocence Lost":

"A tug of war is going on inside of me
A calloused heart that wants to make a change
While time prevails I'm fighting tooth and nail
Keeping me set in my ways."

Others, like "Step of Faith," encourage us to do God's work:

"Oh God give us a faith accompanied by deed
Give us hearts that feel the pain of those in need
Give us love enough to be with them through the night
Be our guide and light."

To me these songs fit with an Anabaptist perspective that says life is not easy, we struggle, there is pain and yet in the midst of it all we need to know God's care.

"Bound up with love
Held in the hearts of the ones who believe
Whispering prayers
That rise in the night like smoke on the breeze."

Wonder and Blue is a pleasant recording well worth your time. Unruh is touring in churches in Canada this summer for Mennonite Central Committee.

BITTERSWEET HOMECOMING

What We Have Tasted *by Reunion Vocal Band (RVB, Ephrata, Pa., 1996, CD)*

Reviewed by Ben Chappell, Bluffton, Ohio

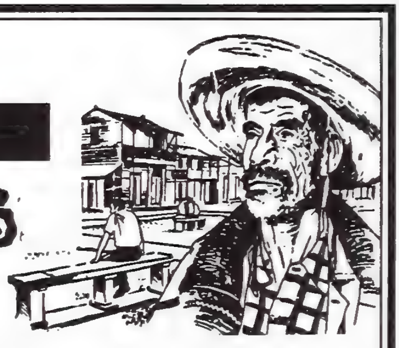
Recorded "in Cheryl and Steve's basement" in Pennsylvania, this album is a potluck of songs from folks joined by a desire to make good music together.

At its best moments, the album comes across as a back-porch jam session, with the songs serving as a means for the musicians to exercise community, relive old times and create together. It kicks off with a lush, yet syncopated, version of the gospel tune "I Will Arise" to whet the appetite. "Home" maintains the sentimental, country attitude—the lyrics are really secondary to the warmth of the guitar slides and vocal harmonies. Then the shuffle of "The Drums Made My Shoes Dance" introduces a lighter side of RVB. From this point on, diversity is the rule, and changes of pace abound. The songs range from old-time gospel remakes to debut recordings, with a few covers and recycled originals thrown in. The diversity of styles is sometimes refreshing and sometimes a distraction.

REUNION VOCAL BAND
what we have tasted

The liner notes list 16 men and women as members of the band, with seven different writers or arrangers (notably Jim Croegaert and Chuck Neufeld) contributing original material. As can happen in any jam session, too much attention sometimes goes to the individual songwriter or lead vocalist on a particular track. This is unfortunate because more than in songwriting and lyrics, the band's strength is its members' abilities to play and sing together.

"Hope to the End" gives a glimpse of the potential for sweet three-part harmonizing in this group. Sometimes this comes out in '60s-style pop choruses, as on "Between the Lines," but


TOURMAGINATION
MEXICO '96
November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

the blending voices shine brightest in a tight, gospel arrangement. Every song on the album could have benefited from showcasing these harmonies more. Throughout the album, the tracks that employ an old-time, country sound work best, and leave me hungry for second helpings, especially when Dean Clemmer lays down the smooth sounds of his steel guitar and dobro. These moments give the album the mood of bittersweet homecoming and make the whole collection well worth a taste.

BOOKS

CREATING SPACE FOR CHRIST

Seeking the Kingdom: Devotions for the Daily Journey of Faith *by Richard J. Foster (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, 129 pages)*

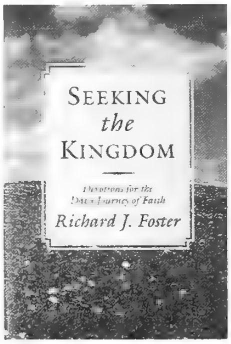
Reviewed by Jeannie Zehr, Newton, Kan.

When I began reading *Seeking the Kingdom,* I did it hurriedly so I could complete the review by my deadline. After two or three chapters I realized that in order to really get a feel for the book I needed to read it more like the author intended. You need a Bible, notebook and pen at hand and time to reflect on what you read, and do the suggested occasional exercise or meditation, and the "For further study" suggestions. It's a great little book for personal faith development and growth, or for use by a small group studying together over a number of sessions.

Richard Foster is known for his writings on spiritual growth, *Prayer* and *Celebration of Discipline.* This book quotes many brief passages from Foster's earlier writings and from other well-known Christian writers. Its three parts reflect on "Moving Inward," "Moving Upward" and "Moving Outward."

I was drawn into some chapters more than others, which probably reflects more where I am in my own personal faith journey than on what the author said.

I was recently in Mexico City, where I marveled at the ease with which new Christians prayed in public as compared with many North American Mennonites. So I read with interest Foster's comments on Christians who feel God will not answer prayers unless you say it just right.



Another section that intrigued me was thoughts on having a "familiar friendship with Jesus," as Thomas a Kempis called creating an emotional and spiritual space in our lives that allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in our hearts.

This little book is one I want to return to, pray over and through its help seek God's guidance for my life.

WHEN LIVES INTERSECT

Visionaries *by Bill Mosher (Orbis, 1995, 168 pages)*

Reviewed by Melanie A. Zuercher, assistant editor

Visionaries is, in many ways, a book about interrelationship. Certain people dedicate months, years or their entire lives to a cause going beyond "reason" or "pragmatism" to what Bill Mosher calls "the magic" that occurs when one person helps another and lives intersect.

Part of that magic means that people who give up everything to volunteer to care for terminally ill patients in North Carolina find their lives enriched, spiritually and materially, beyond anything they imagined. A career U.S. government official spends all his spare time and exerts his political influence for charitable causes and is able to help a Haitian woman build a children's hospital in Port-au-Prince despite an economic embargo.

That *The Visionaries,* a documentary series on public television, exists at all is part of the magic. This companion volume, written by journalist and producer Mosher, not only tells the stories of the people featured in the documentary, who have accomplished the so-called impossible on little more than faith. It also gives the against-the-odds account of how the TV series came to be made, without network backing or corporate support, on nothing but a gut feeling and "the magic" of the right people coming together at the right time for the right reasons.

Visionaries reads like fiction. Plot lines and characters intersect. Settings range from the remote Philippine island of Jolo to the streets of Bogota, Colombia, from refugee camps in Sudan to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. It includes suspense, tragedy and remarkable coincidences. It spotlights a number of "people of vision" while making the point that their vision has spread, like ripples from a stone tossed into water, far beyond themselves.

My major reservation is that the subject is primarily direct service—people with resources directly providing food, clothing, shelter, medicine and education to people who have nothing. Mosher knows this and is not apologetic; indeed there is evidence here, as in the story of Father Xavier's work with street children in Colombia, that once desperate need is met, people are often able to go on and improve their lives tremendously on their own power and ability. I would only caution readers to remember that salving the wounds of the poor, generation after generation, does not stop the cause of the injury.

With this in mind, every voluntary service unit and mission agency should have this book in its library, solely on its assertion of the true value of service: the intersection of two lives (helper and helped), and what each can give to the other. Beside this, most other program goals can, and should, quietly crumble into dust.

Resources

• **Anthony Brown Sings Spirituals** is a new CD featuring Brown, a member of Seattle Mennonite Church, with Lisa Bergman on piano. Available for $15 U.S. from Faith & Life Bookstore; (316) 283-2210.

• **Wonder & Blue** is a new recording by Rick Unruh of songs that deal with life in our postmodern world. In Canada, available at Christian bookstores. U.S. credit card orders (VISA or Mastercard): call Christian Marketing Canada, 1-800-387-6950; $14.99 Cdn. audiocassette/$21.99 Cdn. CD.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
038471.0 00000 506
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Under God's reign

When I first decided to follow Jesus, to accept him as my personal Savior, I knew I would have to change. Before I had even read much of the Bible, I had a strong intuition that being a Christian meant more than a free ticket to heaven. It involved a change in my behavior.

I first made that decision in my own bedroom after listening to Billy Graham preach on television. I had wanted to before, but I was scared. I knew it was not something to take lightly. I knew I would have to clean up my talk; no more racist jokes. And I would have to start treating people kindly, think of others' needs, not just my own. I also felt that war was wrong, and I wanted to oppose the Vietnam War however I could.

The gospel has to do with obeying the reign of God, and God's reign is one of love, justice and mercy.

I failed many times in my attempts to follow, to imitate, Jesus. A few years later, I joined an evangelical church, and its emphasis on Bible study and prayer helped me grow in my knowledge of God. But this church also believed that Christians—at least American Christians—should be patriotic, and that joining the Army was OK.

This confused me, because my instincts had been otherwise. But though I did not join the Army, I flew the flag and tried to be patriotic. After all, I respected my pastor's Bible training.

As years passed and I continued studying the Bible, I found myself returning to the instincts—or inclinations—I had had when I first became a Christian. I decided that Jesus was clear about God's intention of loving one's neighbor, and that that included one's enemies.

In college I visited many churches—all evangelical—and each had something to offer me. But I found none that harmonized with my understanding of the Bible's teaching about peace.

After college I joined a Mennonite congregation, and I felt at home. It had its problems, of course, but I felt at peace with its teachings and its attempts to follow the way of Jesus.

Given my story, you may understand why I wanted to publish the two stories in this issue of people who chose to be Mennonite after leaving evangelical communities. Their stories resonate with mine.

Preaching the gospel: You may also understand why I am pained when I hear Mennonites speak of Jesus' call to love one's enemies as something peripheral to the gospel. I joined the Mennonite church because I believed it was preaching the gospel more clearly than other groups.

The Gospel of Mark describes Jesus "proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news'" (Mark 1:14-15).

The gospel has to do with obeying the reign of God, and God's reign is one of love, justice and mercy. When God's reign and humans' reign conflict, "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29).

For Tom Oliver that conflict occurred in the Army reserves, where he was trained to kill and told to worship guns. He had to leave, and he is thankful to have found a home in the Mennonite church.

However, Tom is concerned about Mennonites losing their distinctive belief that God calls us to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). "Pacifism is one of the things that keeps us from being acculturated," he says.

Perry Bush makes a similar point. We are tempted, he says, to separate our beliefs from our ethics. But "they are both part and parcel of Christ's kingdom."

Meanwhile, Walfried Goossen calls pacifism a Mennonite heresy. But he describes a false pacifism, one that is self-serving and mean-spirited.

Jesus does not call us to believe in a theory of pacifism. He calls us to live under God's reign, which means we are to love others, even our enemies. That is what being evangelical is—or should be—about. And it is why I left the evangelical community and returned to my initial instincts of following Jesus' way of peace. I'm glad I found a home in the Mennonite church. I hope it continues to be that for others like Tom and Perry and me. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 14
JULY 23, 1996

Inside

From Ur to Hebron / p. 10
Food fight / p. 11
A reconciler between cultures / p. 12

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
ELKHART LIBRARY
JUL 30 '96

- What's in a name? (page 3)
- Proud to be a Mennonite (page 6)
- The relevance of the gospel (page 8)

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
WORSHIP SERVICE 11:00
LOVE OF MONEY
EVENING OPEN

Call us Mennonite

Prologue

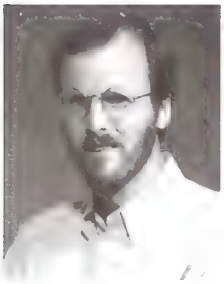
Let me express our gratitude for all of you who have contributed to our fund appeal letter that went out last month. We are greatly encouraged as we receive such responses. We also appreciate your continued prayers.

An ongoing debate among us concerns our identity. What does it mean to be Mennonite? Should we even use that name for our congregations? John Longhurst addresses those questions (page 3) and writes about his own journey of choosing to become a Mennonite (page 6).

Lydia Penner reports on a conference held in the Netherlands in May at which European Mennonites talked about how they should relate their faith to society (page 8). The conference was another event commemorating the 500th anniversary of Menno Simons' birth.

You may want to use this issue in your congregation or Sunday school class to discuss what it means to be Mennonite.

Anne Montgomery, who has worked with Christian Peacemaker Teams, writes about her experience at Hebron (page 10) and how it relates to the story of Abraham, who is believed to be buried in that West Bank city.



Denise Preller offers some helpful advice about handling conflicts with children over food (page 11).

And read about Anne Garber Kampaore (page 12), who has used and is using her linguistic skills to help West Africans understand God's Word. *gh*

Next issue: Welcome everyone

Cover: File photo

Contents

FEATURES

3 What's in a name?

Many Mennonite congregations are dropping the name of the church's founder, Menno Simons.

6 Proud to be a Mennonite

Being Mennonite is more than culture or ethnicity. But it is also more than being like all the other evangelical groups in North America today.

8 The relevance of the gospel

European Mennonites talk about how they should relate their faith to society.

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
10 Bible
11 Children …
12 Profile
13 News
21 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

What's in a name?

John Longhurst

Five hundred years after the birth of Menno Simons, why are so many Mennonite churches dropping their founder's name?

A search of various conference yearbooks shows that over half of Mennonite Brethren churches in the United States and Canada no longer have the word "Mennonite" in their name (182 out of 347 churches). The figure is similar for Canada's Evangelical Mennonite Conference and Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference churches (24 out of 49 and 14 out of 29, respectively).

However, the situation is the opposite for the Mennonite Church, where only 12 percent of 1,100 churches no longer use the name, and for the General Conference Mennonite Church, where only 47 of 405 churches no longer identify themselves as Mennonite in their name.

Churches that drop the word "Mennonite" are more likely to use "community church," "Bible fellowship" or "Christian fellowship" to describe themselves. Some have unique names such as The Meeting Place, Church Without Walls, Harvest Celebration Center or the Upper Room Church.

Impediment to outreach: The main reason for dropping the name is the belief that it is an impediment to outreach.

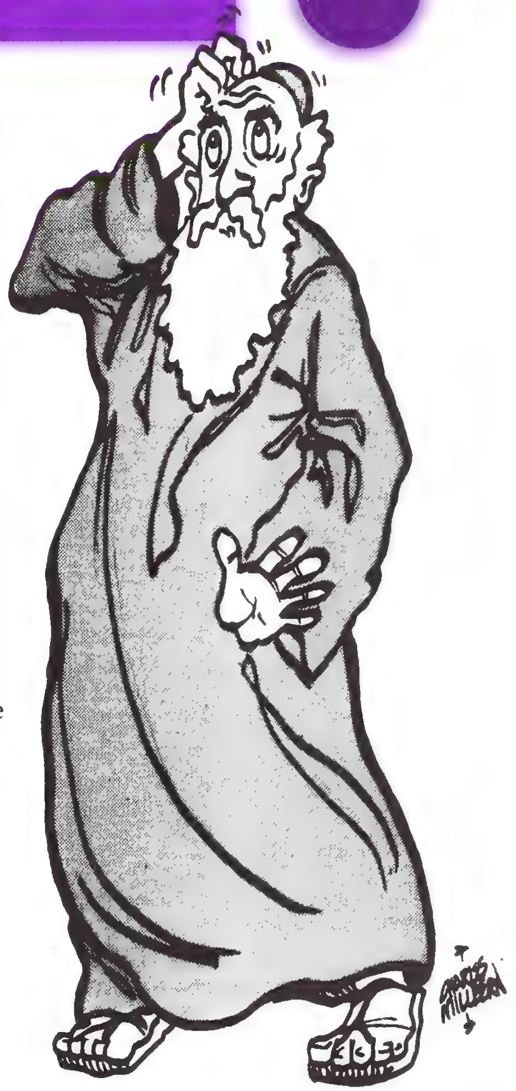
"My experience is that people are at best confused or uninformed or at worst negatively inclined by the word 'Mennonite,'" says Ed Boschman, pastor at the Willow Park Community Church in Kelowna, B.C. "When they do know something about us, they think of us as being Germanic, an ethnic community. This creates hurdles, rather than building bridges."

Until 1988, when it moved to a new facility, the 50-year-old church was known as the Willow Park Mennonite Brethren Church. Since that time the membership has almost doubled.

Irvin Wiebe is the former moderator of Westside Community Church, formerly the Morden (Man.) Mennonite Brethren Church. He says the church dropped the word "Mennonite" because it "reinforced the notion that the church was only for those with Mennonite names. We wanted to be seen as a church for the whole community."

Wiebe says that since making the change five years ago, around half a dozen new people who don't have a traditional Mennonite background have come to the church, which was founded in the 1930s.

For Ewald Unruh, executive director of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Board of Evangelism, choosing a name "isn't a simple question. Churches need to think about the context in which they are being established." In some cases, he says, using the word



Many Mennonite congregations are dropping the name of the church's founder, Menno Simons.

> ***"I met many Mennonite youth in my classes who wondered why their churches had never told them the Mennonite story. Once they knew, they were proud to have that radical Christian background."***
>
> **Harry Loewen**

"Mennonite" can aid in outreach, but in others it can hamper it. Almost no new Mennonite Brethren churches choose to use the name.

Sneaky evangelism? Some critics say that churches that go this route are being sneaky. But Boschman disagrees. "We aren't trying to be sneaky about our denominational affiliation—it's printed on the materials we hand out on Sundays," he says. "We want to connect with people on the basis of our relationship to Christ, then share our Anabaptist story. By then we've already bridged."

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Unruh uses the analogy of first and last names. "When I meet someone, I say my name is Ewald. If they want to know more about me, I tell them my last name. This places me in a family."

The goal in church planting, he says, is "first to establish a congregational identity, then the denominational identity. It starts locally, then spreads out."

Menno Hamm, editor of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference publication *The Messenger*, says that in his conference "it's not a matter of churches wanting to hide their affiliation—most have it in smaller letters on the sign or stationery."

Feel good about themselves: Why have few churches in the Mennonite Church or General Conference Mennonite Church dropped the name? Everett Thomas of the Mennonite Church Board of Congregational Ministries says, "Perhaps it's because we have a longer history in North America, dating back to the 1600s. Our roots are deep."

As well, he says, the Mennonite Church "has a keen sense of conference. If a church decided to change its name, other churches would ask questions. There is a sense of mutual accountability." He also thinks there is "a significant appreciation for the Mennonite distinctives" such as peace, practical service and discipleship.

He believes that advertisements about Mennonites that appeared in the media in the United States, such as the one that promoted a "muscular Christianity," did as much to "help us feel good about ourselves as Mennonites as it helped people outside the church to understand who we are."

For Thomas, the name isn't an impediment to outreach. "The Mennonite Church is growing, not declining," he says. "We can do evangelism without giving up distinctives."

Tym Elias, staff person for outreach and church planting for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, agrees. "Our vision for who we are as a church has a lot to do with it," he says. "Our birthright is the Mennonite vision. People are attracted to that vision. Churches that emphasize that vision are growing."

Mennonite in more than name: Among the churches that are dropping the name are ethnic, or cross-cultural congregations. These are the new Korean, Hispanic, Slavic, Chinese, Indonesian and other churches that are choosing to affiliate with various Mennonite conferences. Few use the word "Mennonite" in their name.

This doesn't mean, however, that they don't prize Mennonite distinctives, according to Loyal Funk, who helps coordinate cross-cultural ministries for the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. "On issues like peace, the sacredness of life or separation of church and state, they are more Anabaptist than most other U.S. Mennonite Brethren," he says, noting that the new Slavic churches will not permit people to join if they belong to the military and that the Koreans identify themselves as "evangelical Anabaptists."

As for why they don't use "Mennonite" in their names, Funk says, "that word conjures up a Germanic background that just doesn't suit them. We can't expect them to accept our cultural background."

Bucking the trend: Not every new church has dropped the name. The Mennonite Brethren church in Moncton, New Brunswick, used to call itself the Riverview Bible Church, but today it is the River of Life Mennonite Brethren Church. Why the change? According to Chris Standen of the River of Life leadership team, "There are a lot of independent splinter churches in the city that don't have good reputations for longevity or financial credibility. As a result, many people are reluctant to visit them. Our former name, plus the fact that we meet in a rented facility, made us sound like one of them.

"We believed it was important to show that we are affiliated with a denomination."

"Our birthright is the Mennonite vision. People are attracted to that vision. Churches that emphasize that vision are growing."

Tym Elias

This spring the church did a door-to-door campaign to invite people to a free pancake breakfast. "About one in 10 asked who Mennonites are," he says. "It was a conversation starter." As well, a number of people were familiar with Mennonites because of the work of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), which has placed volunteers in the city and recently was awarded a major contract to recycle tires and create jobs in the province.

"MCC's high profile helps us connect with people," he says.

Another church bucking the trend is the Laotian Mennonite Church of St. Catharines, Ont. According to pastor Kuaying Teng, "for us, the name 'Mennonite' stands for peace." He says that many Laotians, like himself, have experienced conflict and violence. "They want peace. When they hear what being Mennonite stands for, it opens a door for conversation about our faith."

What about the future? Funk fears that for U.S. Mennonite Brethren the name change is symbolic of a changing relationship to larger conference bodies. "We are becoming more like a federation of churches, not a denomination. We used to live and die by the conference dues, but today churches pick and choose what they will support. Half the churches give hardly anything to the conference."

In the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, "for some the discussion is about whether we are Mennonites or evangelicals," says Hamm. For Elias, changing the name "strikes at the heart of who we are and who we want to be. Will we go mainstream evangelical or will we be stewards of our tradition? We have received a calling from Christ to share our unique faith in the world.

"I don't know of any [Missionary] Alliance churches that are ashamed to call themselves Alliance," he adds.

Harry Loewen, editor of the book *Why I Am a Mennonite,* feels strongly that many churches are not just getting rid of the name to do better outreach but also "to put distance between themselves and Mennonite distinctives. This is unfortunate because many people are interested in our heritage. I wonder if these churches realize what they are losing."

Loewen recently retired after holding the chair in Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg for 18 years. "I met many Mennonite youth in my classes who wondered why their churches had never told them the Mennonite story. Once they knew, they were proud to have that radical Christian background."

John Longhurst, who works for Mennonite Central Committee Canada in communications, wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors.

Proud to be a Mennonite

Being Mennonite is more than culture or ethnicity. But it is also more than being like all the other evangelical groups in North America today.

John Longhurst

Twenty years ago, I became a Mennonite. At the time, I had no idea what a Mennonite was. Until I joined, I didn't even realize that the various Mennonite churches in my hometown of St. Catharines, Ont., belonged to different conferences.

I didn't know anything about the peace position. The idea of Christian service was completely foreign to me.

The fact that the church was Mennonite wasn't the reason I joined, but neither did it keep me away. It would be a better story if I had experienced an epiphany about Mennonite distinctives such as peacemaking. But I joined for the same reason many people join a church—I had a spiritual need, and the pastor and congregation were welcoming and caring.

Only later did I discover things like the commitment to peacemaking. When I first heard about it, I wanted to know more. I asked my new friends about it, but they were vague and noncommittal. They told me not to worry about it, that it wasn't important. It was confusing at the time, but now I think they were probably afraid I would leave the church, since my family has a background of military service and I had once belonged to the Air Force cadets. But the opposite was true—I wanted to know more, and their oblique answers only made me search harder.

Today I think I am thoroughly Mennonite. I graduated from a Mennonite college and have served with three Mennonite agencies. In my role directing media relations for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada, I have even emerged as a spokesperson for Mennonites in Canada, including authoring a media guide about the church. It's a daunting task, to be sure.

Open doors for witness: I'm also proud to be Mennonite. I don't feel I need to hide it. The reporters across Canada I relate to have a great deal of respect for Mennonites because of the work of organizations like Mennonite Voluntary Service, Mennonite Disaster Service and MCC. These agencies have done much to open doors for witness about faith across the country. Churches that identify themselves as Mennonite are able to take advantage of the goodwill that these efforts generate among Canadians.

Although I'm not ashamed to say I am a Mennonite, at the same time I'm sympathetic to arguments against using the word in church names. I am mindful of the fact that only 40 years ago I would not have considered joining a Mennonite church in Canada, since most still worshiped in German. Almost 30 years ago it was still an issue for some. In 1977, when I attended my first Canadian Mennonite Brethren convention, some delegates still used German when addressing the group. My knees shaking, I went to a microphone and asked if people would use English only, since some of us didn't understand German. After the session a dear old saint approached me, wagged her finger in my face and said, "How dare you tell us what language we can use!"

Impediment to outreach: In some parts of Canada, Mennonites were

If someone has Germanic origins, a story of sojourn in the former Soviet Union and eats borscht and pluma moos, they can appear Mennonite, but that's not the most important thing. Do they know and love Jesus? Have they committed themselves to a life of faith and discipleship? This, more than the ability to tell a Low German joke, is a test of identity for me.

It is just as valid to talk about Zairian Mennonite culture or Indonesian Mennonite culture as it is to talk about Germanic Mennonite culture. What is a Mennonite food? Fried noodles, wild rice, groundnut stew—and verenike.

isolationist for many years. Mennonite businesses only hired Mennonites. They avoided participating in some community activities for fear of being part of the world. In these places, the name "Mennonite" can evoke memories that may be an impediment to outreach.

I am also sympathetic because in some places Mennonites have projected a cultural image. There's no question that over time Mennonites have acquired cultural trappings and ethnic foods. But I'm not convinced that being a culture is what Menno had in mind when he served the struggling group of persecuted believers that took his name. If someone has Germanic origins, a story of sojourn in the former Soviet Union and eats borscht and pluma moos, they can appear Mennonite, but that's not the most important thing. Do they know and love Jesus? Have they committed themselves to a life of faith and discipleship? This, more than the ability to tell a Low German joke, is a test of identity for me.

Today, with just over half of the world's Mennonites living in the Southern Hemisphere, the definition of Mennonite is undergoing some profound changes. It is just as valid to talk about Zairian Mennonite culture or Indonesian Mennonite culture as it is to talk about Germanic Mennonite culture. What is a Mennonite food? Fried noodles, wild rice, groundnut stew—and verenike.

For me, being Mennonite is more than culture and ethnicity. But it's also more than being like all the other evangelical groups in North America today. God has given Mennonites a unique message about peace and practical, hands-on service that isn't shared by many other denominations. Many other church groups are asking us to help them understand more about how they can be peacemakers or encourage members to live their faith in word and deed.

It would be a shame if we couldn't tell them.

Ardys Becker

Definition change: *Vilayphet Sengsouvanh tells the congregation at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., about her native Vietnamese dress.*

John Longhurst wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors.

The relevance of the gospel

European Mennonites talk about how they should relate their faith to society.

Lydia Penner

An underlying question at MERK (Mennonitische Europaische Regionalkonferenz) concerned the church's relationship to the world. What is the relevance of the gospel to the world, and how do Christians relate to society?

Neal Blough, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Paris, sketched two poles in the adaptation of European Mennonites to modern times, referring to the "ecumenical" and the "evangelical" groups.

The first, under the influence of the Enlightenment, are oriented to the world around them; the second, shaped by Pietist and revivalist movements, tend to withdraw within themselves. In pointing to the strengths and pitfalls of each group, he attempted to formulate a common basis.

The gospel, said Blough, is a new reality in the world. Our choice is to let ourselves be transformed by the Spirit of God so that our community can be salt and light to the world.

A strong current in several presentations was the need to deepen our spiritual life by a discipline of prayer. Bernhard Ott of the European Mennonite Bible School (Bienenberg, Switzerland) expressed this clearly. Perhaps he struck a chord—the workshop on spirituality in daily life, led by Bernie Thiessen of Hamburg, Germany, and Theo van der Laan of Apeldoorn, Netherlands, had far more participants than had signed up.

More than 800 European Mennonites met May 16-19 in Elspeet, Netherlands, as part of the 500th anniversary of Menno Simons' birth. See the news article in our July 9 issue, page 18.

A group encouraging us to "go public" with our witness was the European Mennonite Peace Committee, which organized a service Friday night. Witnesses told about the struggle in Switzerland to do alternative service instead of military service, about peace work in the former Yugoslavia, and courses in Brussels on conflict mediation.

Stand up: At the end of each peace witness, Maarten van der Werf, secretary of the peace committee, asked those who had involvement in that area of peace to stand. Many people were uncertain about what sort of involvement might be worthy of acknowledgment. I, for one, didn't stand up.

When I asked Maarten about this, he smiled. "I'm glad people were uncertain. That was the whole point. We want to encourage Mennonites to stand up and witness about what they're doing."

"But," I protested, "you know that European Mennonites are modest about their good deeds, find it offensive, even, to brag about them."

Maarten replied, "When they start to brag, we'll be on the spot to warn them. Telling openly about the work we do is something different altogether—we encourage each other by it."

Another popular workshop was the one on "the congregation and confession of faith." In the Netherlands this is a burning issue because seminary professor Sjouke Voolstra is proposing that Dutch Mennonites formulate a common confession for our time (currently each baptismal candidate writers a personal confession).

A workshop on homosexuality, led by Babs Birza of the Netherlands and Neal Blough, had good attendance. At the last MERK gathering, the Dutch insisted that a workshop be held on this topic. At that time the idea met with resistance.

Our choice is to let ourselves be transformed by the Spirit of God so that our community can be salt and light to the world.

Neal Blough

Blough placed homosexuality within the broader theme of sexuality. Anyone can have problems with his or her sexuality, he said. French Mennonites do not object to a workshop on homosexuality, he said, if they are given opportunity to present their own view and are not pressured to accept a liberal position.

Lydia Penner, who visited the Netherlands in May, wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors.

Letters

MAGAZINE WANTED IN INDIA

Greetings in the precious name of Christ Jesus.

First, I am grateful to you that you accepted my request and included me in your gift subscribers list. I have gotten many issues of *The Mennonite* and have been blessed a lot.

From these issues I came to know more about God and how God is working among his people all over the world. I learned the best lessons from [these issues] on serving God and God's people. *The Mennonite* gives us many suitable articles on faith, blessing, healing, many intellectual and moral questions. It brings news, many burning issues about society, and reviews.

Second, for the last few months I have not gotten any issues from you. Maybe my turn is over. Therefore, may I request you to continue me in your gift subscribers list and send me *The Mennonite* regularly once again?

I will be grateful to you because I need this magazine for my own spiritual, ethical and moral life.

I express my thankfulness to all *The Mennonite* family members who support you by their prayers and all other things. I hope you will bring out some issues for those who don't know about Jesus Christ and who live far away from Almighty God. *Nutan Prabhat Kanwar, Jagdeeshpur, India*

Editor's note: *We welcome contributions to our gift subscriptions fund for overseas readers who cannot afford it. Mail to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

MORE LETTERS, PLEASE

I've just finished a careful reading of the June 11 issue of *The Mennonite.* The emphasis on worship, from a variety of points of view, is noteworthy, but where were the letters to the editor?

My wife and I, both between 85 and 90, are diligent readers. Currently we subscribe to 23 publications. Nearly always I turn first to "Letters" in every one of them. I do the same in our daily newspaper. (I truly want to know that the readers are thinking.) Could you not publish one or two pages of letters in each issue?

A bit of Mennonite history (as I recall it from much younger days): My uncle, Rev. J.E. Amstutz, was pastor of a General Conference church in Halstead, Kan., for a number of years until about 1923. When called to Apostolic Mennonite Church (Trenton, Ohio) in 1923, he served as its pastor for 40-plus years. He died in Florida in the fall of 1981 at age 100. Uncle John was a remarkable man. In many respects he was my theological mentor.

About worship: One of the fears and/or concerns we have is that to attract youth, or young marrieds, or some types of "new Christians," a great variety of contemporary worship practices are often introduced. Musical and visual innovations become the "bait" for the young. What is then left for us octogenarians who enjoy and benefit from only the formal, the traditional, the predictable forms of worship, unchanged in our lifetimes?

Changing worship practices to promote growth is wrong. *Adrian H. Amstutz, Long Beach, Calif.*

Editor's note: *We publish all letters to the editor that we receive. I hope you enjoyed our July 9 issue.*

KEEP WORSHIP/WORKS TOGETHER

This refers to the editorial "Make Worship Our Mission" (June 11 issue). How the pendulum swings! Yes, worship is important; we do well to give it more attention. But it needs to be done in perspective. Various forces try to separate faith and works. As Anabaptists we say the two need to be kept together, but it is not easy. In the Old Testament the prophets were able to discern that God did not want sacrifices/worship without obedience/faithfulness.

In a similar way, I believe God created us for a twofold relationship, and the two cannot be separated. God created us for fellowship with himself and to be a partner with him in his working in the world. In all the above, as well as in love, we need to keep the vertical and horizontal relationships tied together. To make worship central implies that God needs our worship; it is we who need to worship to foster this relationship with God. Also, I believe to place worship first means we have fallen into the trap that if our worship of God is good enough, the way we live out our lives will automatically be good. *Arthur A. Voth, Lititz, Pa.*

DON'T CRITICIZE BILLY GRAHAM

The May 28 issue contains an article by Wayne Northey, "When Evangelism Is a Heresy" (page 11). Northey can write convincingly. His essay, if truthful, can stand alone. Defaming Billy Graham is contemptible.

Dr. Graham has, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, probably introduced more people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ than any person alive today. *Janice Sudberry, Pekin, Ill.*

In response to the article "When Evangelism Is a Heresy" by Wayne Northey (May 28), the statement "When Billy Graham preached love of Jesus to American soldiers in Vietnam but not love of the Viet Cong simultaneously, he was not preaching the gospel" seems to be directed against Billy Graham and his ministry.

Billy Graham has preached the gospel (not heresy) in 85 different countries, and thousands of people have received salvation through Jesus Christ through his ministry.

Some of Northey's statements about the gospel are confusing and misleading. In a summary statement the apostle Paul says, "The gospel I preached to you … as of first importance [is] that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4 NIV). Since the beginning of his evangelistic crusades, Billy Graham has emphasized the cross and the resurrection of Christ in his messages.

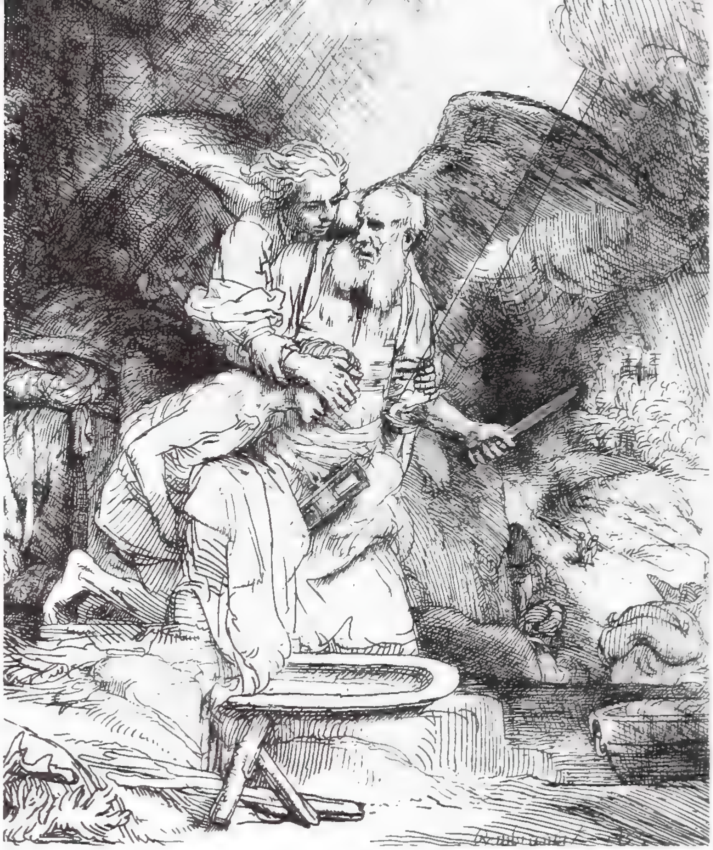
Recently Billy Graham and his wife were honored in Washington with the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal. "The medal recognizes the Grahams for outstanding and lasting contributions to morality, racial equality, philanthropy and religion" (see June 25 issue, page 15).

I believe we should thank God for the ministry of Billy Graham and pray for him, not criticize him. *Herbert M. Dalke, Hopedale, Ill.*

From Ur to Hebron

Trust in God empowers us to risk the unknown and stand with the oppressed.

Anne Montgomery


"Sacrifice of Isaac Etching" by Rembrandt

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Abraham, embracing his son on the mountain, found another perspective on the will of God.

Scripture offers Abraham's journey from Ur to Hebron as a model of faith and a trust in God that empowers us to risk the unknown. This past year, with several detours, I followed in the footsteps of Abraham. I stood on the Ziggurat at Ur, where Abraham began his journey into faith. On Feb. 28, not far from Abraham's final resting place, I sat on the roof of a house about to be bulldozed. On Good Friday I walked on a roof in Karakosh, near ancient Nineveh, listening to the chanting of the faithful in a village that out of its own poverty had housed and fed refugees from cities bombed during the Gulf War. On April 11 I watched from another roof as yet another Palestinian home was reduced to rubble.

Rooftops should give perspective, a meaningful map of the reality through which we travel. To me, however, they have come to symbolize powerlessness in the face of systematic oppression.

We had carried a few boxes of medicine to Iraq to divide among large hospitals where children die in pain from leukemia, from lymph and bone cancer, from some diseases easily curable with proper nourishment, antibiotics and instruments, and from others linked to a war-polluted environment.

In Hebron we had only our bodies, to be dragged away by Israeli soldiers before a bulldozer could calmly do its job, its driver seemingly as mechanized as his vehicle. While the soldiers sang and joked to celebrate this event, the family, its only crime building on its own land, wept.

There are many occasions to reflect on the deliberate slaughter of the innocents: the slaughter of bodies and spirits. When a young man immolates himself and others, when government leaders carry such terrorism to homes and cities, do they truly think their mandate is from heaven?

I am sure that Abraham, embracing his son on the mountain he named "God will provide," found another perspective on the will of God. To his own opponents, Jesus responded, "If you were Abraham's children then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things" (John 8: 39-40).

'Sad Friday': The people of Karakosh chanted the meaning for which we search: Cross and resurrection are one, the victory of life and hope over death and despair. As Palestinian theologian Naim Ateek reminds us, we can understand the Passion only through faith in the resurrection. Perhaps this is the only way to cling to hope in a journey that for both Iraqis and Palestinians is a continuation of "Sad Friday" and can so easily lead to a despair prompting either passivity or violence.

In a discussion at St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, Jonathan Kuttab also stressed this danger in a context in which basic principles of international law are ignored as the "peace" agreement is interpreted almost solely in terms of Israeli "security." The deeper theological point is that something systematically evil is taking place, larger than what we see here: a psychological warfare—like that during the Gulf War—that we can recognize as the battle with the principalities and powers, one Christians should know all about.

We should also be ready with the weapons of the powerless, the armor described by Paul (Ephesians 6:11), if we are to resist the hopelessness that makes small nations surrender their resources to the enemy and the oppressed resort to bombs.

Anne Montgomery, a Catholic Religious of the Sacred Heart, has worked with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Hebron since October 1995. Prior to joining CPT full time in January, she worked on nonviolent actions against nuclear weapons and participated in a peace team to Sarajevo. In March Anne helped deliver medical supplies to Iraq as part of Voices in the Wilderness, a group challenging destructive United Nations sanctions. She lives in a community in New York City. Anne is 69 years old.

Children are people, too

Food fight

How to win the food wars with your children

Denise Preller

Denise Preller is director of God's Little Acre Preschool at North Danvers Mennonite Church, Danvers, Ill., where she is a member.

It's 6 o'clock, the dinner bell rings, and the contenders take their places. In one corner are the well-meaning parents. Their goal: get Little Junior to eat a well-balanced nutritious meal. In the other corner is Little Junior, who knows nothing about well-balanced or nutritious. His goal: to not put anything in his mouth that tastes bad or looks strange. (Little Junior really paid attention when he was 2.)

The contenders take to the ring. If Little Junior wins, he uses his power to dictate a short list of possible foods for dinner: pizza, hot dogs, macaroni and cheese, chicken nuggets. If the parents win, they use their power to dictate strict uncompromising rules like, Everyone must eat whatever is cooked. Food is put on Little Junior's plate, and Little Junior is required to eat it all.

Either way, both sides lose. If Little Junior wins, she loses by not learning healthy eating habits or manners, and parents lose by having to cook two meals instead of one. If the parents win, they lose by making their dinner table a battlefield, and Little Junior loses the opportunity to practice controlling her own food intake.

To reach a peace accord in the food wars, both sides must win. A negotiated settlement at a family meeting is needed.

Here are some things to review before the meeting:

1. It is appropriate to expect different behavior from different ages of children.
2. Prepare for a breaking-in process as you start using the rules.
3. Bending and breaking the rules will mean you will end up with the same mess you were trying to correct.
4. Prepare to handle sticking to the rules when they do not work in your favor.
5. Mom and Dad need to settle together how they feel about food wars before attempting a family meeting.
6. A child who has learned healthy attitudes about food will be able to say the following:

- I eat because I am hungry, and I need food to be healthy.
- Food, or the lack thereof, is never used as a punishment or a reward.
- I am never forced to eat.
- I am never hungry, except in a healthy way before meals.
- I know when I am full and I stop eating.
- I am willing to try a variety of foods, and I know it is normal not to like everything.
- The adults in my life respect me as a person by giving me choices about food.
- I show respect to the adults in my life who buy and prepare food by not complaining and graciously trying everything served.
- I know that food is a gift from God, and it is right and proper that I should enjoy God's gifts.

Denise Preller

It is normal not to like everything.

Our family rules ended up looking like this:

1. This is not a restaurant.
2. The parents' job is to provide nutritious meals.
3. Family members must respect the person who cooked the meal. It is never appropriate to say, "Yuck" or, "What else is there?"
4. Strong food dislikes by members of the family will be respected by the person preparing the meal. (Others pointed out that Mom never makes things for dinner she doesn't like.)

Parents can only put food on a child's plate with supervision from the child.

A small portion of everything must be taken.

5. Everything taken must be eaten.
6. You can go back for as many servings as you like.
7. Food placed on your plate that remains uneaten will be placed in the refrigerator. If you are hungry again before bedtime, the food can be microwaved and eaten.
8. No one should have to be hungry because nothing was served for dinner they liked. A peanut butter sandwich can be substituted.
9. Before desserts are available to be eaten after dinner, it must be agreed upon by both the child and the parents that a "meal-sized" portion of food has been consumed at dinner.
10. Once a week, the children will get to decide what's for dinner.
11. Rules may be changed but must be followed until they are changed.

If you and your children are warring over food, work at coming to a peaceful settlement. Too often in our society, food isn't food. The eating of food ceases to be a necessary means to stay alive. It becomes instead a control issue, something to feed a "hole in your soul" or a way of showing and receiving love.

Those of us who struggle with these issues are acutely aware of how difficult it is to overcome an unhealthy relationship with food. Parents with healthy and respectful relationships with their children tend to be able to extend that respect into the food wars arena.

Does your family come out slugging when the dinner bell rings?

A reconciler between cultures

Anne Garber Kampaore helps West Africans understand God's Word.

Carla Reimer

As a high school student, Anne Garber Kompaore dreamed that one day she would work as a United Nations interpreter.

"I liked the idea of an interpreter acting as a reconciler between two cultures, helping them gain a better understanding of each other," says Anne, a native of Ontario who began studying French at age 12.

While she didn't reach what she calls a "lofty" adolescent goal, her passion for language and cross-cultural settings led her to a remote location in Western Africa.

Since 1982 Anne has lived in Burkina Faso—first in the village of Kotoura and later in Ouagadougou, a city of about 1 million, where she serves as a linguist with the National Bible Translation and Literacy Association (ANTBA). In 1993 she married Daniel Kompaore, a Burkinabe who is the ANTBA executive secretary.

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church support her work. She is a member of First Mennonite Church in Urbana, Ill., and an associate member of Ottawa (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

In many ways her job today is not much different from her teenage image of the ideal career, except now "I am helping another culture understand God's Word," she says.

It was while Kompaore was working in Nyanga, Zaire, in 1975-76 that she had her first inkling that she might want to work as a Bible translator.

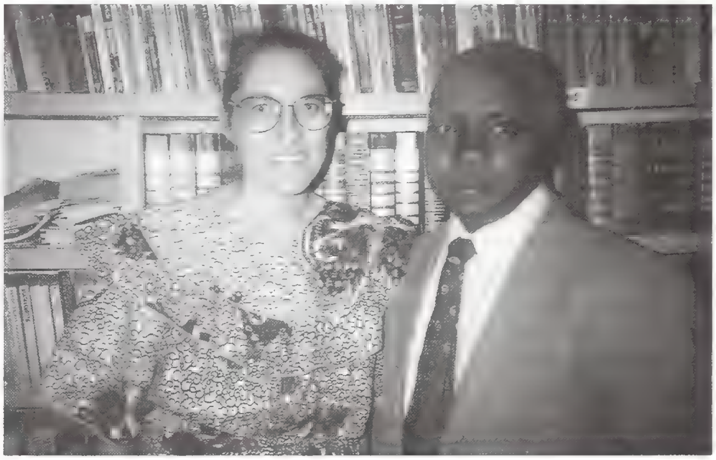
She recalls asking a translation consultant in Zaire what kind of education she would need to pursue that line of work. When he said a Ph.D., she was flabbergasted, since she had yet to complete her bachelor's degree.

In July 1976, Anne returned to Ontario, where she completed a bachelor's degree in linguistics from the University of Ottawa. When AIMM asked her if in the future she would be interested in Bible translation work in Burkina Faso, she said yes.

In the meantime, even though AIMM had yet to offer her a definite assignment, she turned down an assignment in Germany with Mennonite Central Committee. Her father thought she had given up a good opportunity, Anne says, but she had a sense that God was leading her in another direction.

She was right. After spending a summer studying African linguistics at the University of Illinois in Urbana, she decided to pursue that field of study there. She received a master's degree and, later, a Ph.D. in African linguistics.

Animist background: In the course of her translation work in Burkina Faso, Anne has discovered that she can't assume that her Burkinabe friends will approach the Bible in the same way she does, especially since most are coming from a Muslim and/or animist background.



Helping another culture: *Anne Garber Kompaore and Daniel, her husband. A native of Ontario, Anne has studied 10 languages and "dabbled" in six others over the course of her years as a linguist.*

> ***"God is faithful in bringing me through whatever I may encounter."***
>
> ***Anne Garber Kompaore***

For example, when she helped translate a passage from James 5 that said, "The prayer of faith will heal the sick person," a non-Christian Burkinabe thought the Scripture meant that a person needed to pray to a fetish in order to experience healing.

Consequently, the translation was changed to make it clear that the prayer is directed at God and that it is the Lord who will heal the sick person. "We have to be explicit about what one has faith in and who one prays to," Anne says.

It has also been hard, at times, for Burkinabe Mennonites to figure out what kind of cultural activities are appropriate for them to participate in. "The religious and cultural worlds are intertwined," she says.

A good illustration of this is when there is a death. A funeral service is held within 24 hours of the death, but 40 days later the extended family is called together for a second funeral, where the members stay awake all night and participate in specific rites.

It's obvious, says Anne, that the second funeral service plays a critical role in the family's grieving process. However, it's also clear that it involves elements of ancestor worship.

Over the years, Mennonites in Burkina Faso have taken varying positions about whether they can participate in these funeral services and to what degree.

These kinds of challenges, she says, have led her to rely on God more in her own life. "I've become more focused on my spiritual needs. I've run into situations for which there are no easy answers. I've realized that I can do nothing else except to learn to trust more in God. And I've learned that God is faithful in bringing me through whatever I may encounter."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

AMBS • window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Reflections

"A good year—one we will long remember"

Gerald Gerbrandt, interim president

June 20, 1996

I am surrounded by boxes and clutter. Our year at AMBS is over and our family is preparing for the move back to Winnipeg.

My introduction came at the June 1995 board meetings. I watched as the board struggled with financial pressures. The challenge was obvious, but the dedication and wisdom of this group—charged by the church to set direction for the school—was reassuring. I wondered how we would manage, but then was humbled by the willingness of all employees to work at the challenge together.

Summer school 1995 drew people from throughout North America and beyond. The fellowship of these, most also far away from home, provided an immediate community for us. Then came the opening of the fall semester. When registration was complete, student enrollment was up twenty-five percent. The enthusiasm and excitement this created set the tone for the year.

Much of the school year itself is a blur—it passed so quickly. But who can forget Michael Banks, pastor from New York City, inviting us to join the movement of God? Coffee and discussion in the lounge with students and colleagues was an important aspect of daily life. A January conference sponsored with Mennonite Mutual Aid considered how our tradition of mutual aid might remain alive into the future. Countless meetings appeared on my daily schedule. John Collins in the Theological Lectureship introduced us to the Dead Sea Scrolls and reflected with us how the ideas in them may have influenced how Jesus was understood. Visits to churches were an opportunity to share about the seminary and listen to suggestions and concerns. I was impressed by the supportive words I heard and the interest in AMBS. The year ended with Jonathan Larson challenging the graduates and all of us to help transform God's creation, as Christ has transformed us.

J. Tyler Klassen

Truly, we have been enriched by the year. I have come to appreciate our seminary in a new way. Here is a place where enthusiastic students gather to examine where God is calling them and prepare for service in the church. Here is a place where faculty members relate to students, teach, and do research on questions facing the church,while actively involved in their own congregations. Here is a place where students, staff and faculty worship and pray together.

The theme for the fiftieth anniversary celebration was "Foundations for the Future." We, in the Anabaptist tradition, treasure our past and the faithfulness of our ancestors. This is good, and we have much to learn from them. But this is not where our primary focus can be. God is alive and at work in our world, and God is calling the body of Christ to be agents of reconciliation. Our separatist tradition has sometimes prevented us from giving this mission the priority it deserves. As the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church merge, looking outwards must receive higher priority. AMBS has a critical role to play in preparing leaders for such a church. Thank you for allowing me to be part of this community and task for one year!

Gerald Gerbrandt served as interim president of AMBS for one year. This summer he returns to his position as academic dean of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man.

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Commencement

AMBS Panorama

Highlights of the year in photos

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Forty-five students graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 24. Twenty-three received the Master of Divinity; 16 the Master of Arts in Theological Studies; five the Master of Arts in Peace Studies and one the Certificate in Theological Studies.

Douglas Amstutz MDiv. Will complete a summer internship in Moundridge, Kan.; fall plans in process. "A delightful mixture of main course learning with extra-seminary speakers and experiences has been invigorating and challenging for me. Such learnings have fed upon each other." He is married to Wanda Roth Amstutz and is a member of Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., and Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church. His parents are Ken and Vonnie Amstutz, Kidron.

Left to right: Douglas Amstutz, Wanda Roth Amstutz, Premanand Bagh, Terry Berg, Paul Bergen

Steve Echols

Wanda Roth Amstutz MDiv. Will complete a summer internship in Moundridge, Kan.; fall plans in process. "My whole experience at AMBS has been meaningful—relationships with peers and professors, growth in Bible and theology as well as deepened spirituality." Wanda is married to Doug Amstutz and her parents are Howard and Shirley Roth of Tavistock, Ont. She is a member of East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Premanand Bagh Certificate in Theological Studies. Will pursue doctoral study in Oxford, England, and will teach at Allahabad Bible Seminary in India. "I was blessed and enriched by the Mennonite heritage and its tradition. I especially enjoyed the worship, preaching, and Sunday School lessons in the Mennonite churches. The theology and peace studies curriculum at AMBS is excellent." He and Rachel, his wife, have two children. He is a member of the Salem congregation of the General Conference Mennonite Church in India. He is the son of the Rev. Jaisingh and Mrs. Kamla Bagh of Saraipali, Madhya Pradish, India.

Terry Berg MDiv. Will complete a term of Clinical Pastoral Education at Bronson Hospital in Kalamazoo, Mich., this summer. "AMBS has been a place to process previous ministry experiences and to reflect and grow in my understanding of what it means to be a ministering person." Terry is married to Cathy Beery Berg and he is a member of Leamington (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

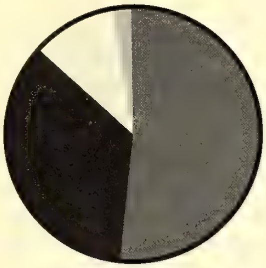
Paul Bergen MDiv. Will return to pastoral ministry with First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alb. "I valued the opportunity to reflect on my pastoral vocation in a context where support and encouragement accompanied the challenge to grow in faith." Paul is married to Heather Bergen and they have two children. His parents are Frank and Ella Bergen, Winnipeg, Man.

Marion Bontrager MDiv. *Not pictured* Will continue as teacher of Bible, Hesston (Kan.) College. Marion is married to Buetta Bontrager and is a member of Hesston Mennonite Church. He previously earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree from GBS and by additional study qualified for the Master of Divinity degree.

Rhett L. Butler MDiv. Pastor of two United Methodist churches near Warsaw, Ind.: Atwood Aldersgate and Clunette. "I have especially appreciated the opportunity to engage the Bible from the perspective of the original language. This has added depth to my biblical understanding." Rhett and Suzanne Butler have three children; he is the son of Keith and Anita Butler of Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Sang Jin Choi MAPS. Will pursue doctoral studies in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. "I am sure that AMBS is a light of Peace Studies and that Mennonites will provide hope for the Christian peace movement toward the 21st century world peace." He is married to Eun-Young Lee and they have one child. His mother is Mrs. Young Choon Kim of Seoul, Korea. He currently serves as youth minister of the Washington Chodae Church.

June Mears Driedger MATS in Christian Spirituality. Plans in process. "Seminary helped me find my voice—to



Programs completed by 1996 graduates

- ▨ Master of Divinity - 23
- ■ Master of Arts in Theological Studies - 16
- □ Master of Arts in Peace Studies - 5
- ░ Certificate in Theological Studies - 1

articulate what I was soulfully experiencing and integrate that with theological language." June is married to Kevin Driedger and she is a member of Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church. Her parents are Ivan and Iris Mears of Los Angeles.

Kevin Driedger MATS in Biblical Studies. Plans in process. "AMBS provided me the opportunity to delve deep into the Bible and emerge with a greater awareness of who I am." Kevin is married to June Mears Driedger and is the son of Dennis and Sue Driedger, Winkler, Man. He is a member of Grace Mennonite Church, Winkler.

Henry Dyck III MAPS. *Not pictured* Will pursue graduate study at Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. Dyck has found meaningful the "faculty commitment to ethics, Anabaptist tradition and academic excellence and the diversity of the student body at AMBS." He also appreciated teaching and mentoring at a youth drop-in center; "Great experience!" Henry is the son of Henry and Caroline Dyck of Harriston, Ont.

Leo J. Filon III MAPS. *Not pictured* Will pursue a degree in Quaker Studies at Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, Ind. Leo appreciated the opportunity to "grapple with Mennonite issues of theology, peace and justice at a time of personal, societal and religious challenge with the help of friends and faculty." Leo is a member of South Bend (Ind.) Friends Meeting, and attended Seattle Mennonite Church, Seattle, Wash. His parents are Leo J. Filon Jr. and Claire A. McCoog Filon of Philadelphia, Pa.

Brent E. Foster MDiv. *Not pictured* Continue as pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill. "I have experienced support and encouragement while exploring in new areas of learning and personal development. The staff and faculty of AMBS have been great." Brent and Sandra, his wife, have three children. His parents are Cecile Amerson and John Foster of Peoria, Ill.

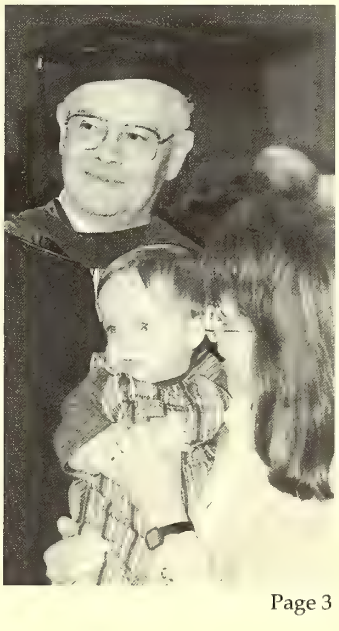
Patty Friesen MDiv. Plans in process. Patty found most helpful at AMBS the opportunity of "connecting with other women students as we test our call and find our place in the church." Patty is a member of Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church. Her parents are Ed and Faye Friesen of Edmonton, Alb.

Raúl O. García MATS in Christian Education. Continue as co-pastor of his congregation in Buenos Aires, and as coordinator of the leadership training program of the Argentine Mennonite Church. What he found meaningful was "to deepen my fellowship with God through the Scripture and the influence of consecrated teachers; also to share experiences with people with the same goals in life." Raúl is married to Anita Edna Swartzentruber and they have three children.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Rhett Butler, Sang Jim Choi, June Mears Driedger, Kevin Driedger, Patty Friesen, Raúl García

Raúl García, Pehuajo, Argentina, celebrates his graduation with his daughter-in-law Silvia Vicente García and youngest grandchild, Nicolás, of Chicago. Raúl, who is president of Mennonite World Conference, coordinates the Leadership Training Program of the Argentine Mennonite Church and serves as co-pastor of his congregation. He received a Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree in Christian Education.
Photo by Mary E. Klassen.



Roger Golden MATS in Christian Spirituality. Pursuing geriatric pastoral care and pastoral ministry. "AMBS has given time for mid-life reflection, renewal and retooling. The enthusiasm and affirmation of faculty, staff and other students has been very meaningful." Roger is married to Alice Golden and they have three children. He is a member of Wawaka Church of the Brethren, Wawaka, Ind. His mother is Martha Golden of Kimmell.

Noé Gonzalía MDiv. Will return to ministry in Colombia. Most meaningful has been "to find a group of persons (professors, staff and students) committed to the Christian values. Our whole family has been surrounded by a positive fraternal environment." Noé is married to Araminta Gonzalía and they have three children. He is the son of Jorge Gonzalía and Rebeca Polanco of Guacari, Colombia.

Susan Gotwals MDiv. Plans in process. "The spiritual depth and commitment to Jesus Christ which faculty members shared in the classroom and in chapels greatly nurtured my own spiritual formation." Susan is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, and is the mother of two children. Her parents are Robert and Lucille Gotwals, Souderton, Pa.

Ruth Johnston MATS in theology and ethics. Plans in process. "I have found meaningful the close community of students and the academic excellence of the faculty." Ruth is the daughter of Don and Betsy Johnston, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, and is a member of First Mennonite Church in Iowa City. She and fellow AMBS graduate Shuji Moriichi were married June 1.

Cameron Kaufman-Frey MDiv. Plans in process. "Seminary has helped me to discern two things: who I am as a minister and where I hear God calling me to minister." Cameron is married to Dawn Kaufman-Frey and is the son of Amsey and Ina Frey, St. Clements, Ont. He is a member of St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Helen Kruger MDiv. Supervisor of a Clinical Pastoral Education program. "To be a church leader means thorough study of one's self through close interaction with peers and teachers in a community setting. Christianity affects all areas of one's life." Helen is married to William Kruger and they have three children. She is a member of Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church.

Ella Mae Lehman MATS in Christian Spirituality. "AMBS has been a place of nurture and challenge. My 'mini-sabbaticals' in this faith community have brought together the head and the heart." Ella Mae and Jay E., her husband, have four children. She is a member of Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Tim Lichti MDiv. Continue as director of MennoHof, a Mennonite and Amish visitors' center in Shipshewana. Lichti says he found most meaningful the "nurturing atmosphere, the sense of partnership in learning and growing, and a solid commitment to quality and the church." Tim is married to Carolyn and they have two children. He is a member of Shore Mennonite Church.

Douglas R. Luginbill MDiv. *Not pictured* Associate pastor of First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio. "Gaining a deep love for Scripture, experiencing diversity and creativity in worship and interacting with a caring community have prepared me to serve the church." Doug is married to Paula Luginbill and they have two children. He is the son of Kathryn Luginbill, Pandora, Ohio. He is a member of Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Chris Marshall MAPS. *Not pictured* Will continue as lecturer in New Testament Studies, Bible College of New Zealand. "I greatly valued the chance to interact with and learn from Mennonite scholars. I feel better equipped to bring some of the richness of the Anabaptist tradition into my own situation in New Zealand." Chris is married to Margaret Marshall and they have two children.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Roger Golden, Noé Gonzalía, Susan Gotwals, Ruth Johnson, Cameron Kaufman-Frey, Helen Kruger

Missionary/storyteller addresses graduates

"Unless a grain of wheat falls in the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." With this text from John 12, Jonathan Larson addressed the AMBS graduates in the May 24 commencement service. The former missionary told stories from the Bible and from his mission experiences of "descent into darkness," and "rising to fruitfulness."

One story related his experience of leading Bible studies with two small congregations on the edge of the Kalahari desert. Because many of the people were illiterate, he abandoned his written lesson materials, and found that in studying Job, the congregation members knew far more than he did. Then he added, "It begins with a falling... giving up what we think we have so that we may be entrusted with that fruitful rising that exceeds our imaginings."

He concluded his address, saying "There is no greater gift than that somewhere in some mystery, there is a falling and rising which awaits us all, and from which creation itself will be transformed."

Jonathan, who currently is interim pastor of Berea Mennonite Church, Atlanta, Ga., was a Mennonite missionary in Botswana from 1981-1994.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Ella Mae Lehman, Tim Lichti, Keith Meyers, Shuji Moriichi, David Moser

Andreas Martin MATS in Biblical Studies. *Not pictured* Will continue studies, pursuing a doctoral degree in chemistry. At AMBS, Andy found most meaningful the study of the Bible in its original languages. He is a member of the Schänzli congregation in Muttenz, Switzerland. His parents are Bruno and Lotti Martin-Lehmann, Basel, Switzerland.

Alan L. McLearn-Montz MATS in Christian Education. *Not pictured* Plans in process. "The knowledge I have gained about the Believers Church, especially as affirmed by the Anabaptist tradition, has convinced me I too want to claim Anabaptism." Alan is married to Brenda McLearn-Montz, and they have one child. He is a member of the Church of the Brethren in Columbia City, Ind. His parents are Vern and Phyllis Montz of Columbia City.

Keith Meyers MDiv. Will complete a term of Clinical Pastoral Education at Ontario Correctional Institute in Brampton. "I will take the warmth of the community at AMBS with me for the rest of my life." Keith is the son of Earl and Clara Meyers, Kitchener, Ont.

Jonathan Larson, commencement speaker, challenged graduates to be willing to give up what is comfortable in order to experience fruitfulness "which exceeds our imaginings."
Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Shuji Moriichi MATS in church history. Plans in process. "I was fortunate enough to learn what studying church history was—for my vocational goal, the Anabaptist churches and their missions." He is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Sapporo, Japan, and is the son of Ryoko Moriichi, Sapporo. He and Ruth Johnston were married on June 1.

David Moser MDiv. Will return to Northern Ireland to do inner city ministry in Belfast. "I have really valued the opportunity to grow in my biblical knowledge and spirituality at AMBS." He is married to Deborah Watters and is the son of Millard and Janean Moser of Berne, Ind. He is a member of First Mennonite Church, Berne.

Left to right: Lois Nickel, Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau, Anita Sauder, Margaret Sawatsky, Carmen Schrock-Hurst, Gordon Scoville

Steve Echols

Lois Nickel MATS in Biblical Studies. Plans in process. "These past three years at AMBS have provided space for spiritual growth, pushed me to explore new ways of thinking and given me tools with which to keep on growing in my faith after I leave." She is married to James Nickel and they have three children. Lois is a member of North Leamington Mennonite Church, Leamington, Ont., and is the daughter of Peter and Sadie Klassen, Port Rowan, Ont.

Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau MDiv. Continue half-time as associate pastor of Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. "Through course work and community I have grown in pastoral identity, spiritual disciplines and understanding worship. I am grateful for these gifts." Brenda is married to Don Paetkau and they have one child. Her parents are Henry and Mary Sawatzky, Winnipeg, Man.

David Ruby MDiv. *Not pictured* Will complete Clinical Pastoral Education during the summer, then begin as pastor of MacGregor (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church. "This time has been a gift of renewal from God in both personal faith and vision of God's call to the church." David is married to Diane Ruby and they have two children. He is the son of Orlando and Violet Ruby, New Hamburg, Ont.

Anita Sauder MDiv. Plans in process. "I found living in community and getting to know a variety of people from a variety of places, backgrounds and religions most informative and enlightening. " Anita is a member of West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio, and is the daughter of Dave and Sharon Sauder of Wauseon.

Margaret Warketin Sawatsky MATS in Christian Spirituality. Will continue as activities therapist at Oaklawn Psychiatric Hospital, Goshen, Ind. "I have appreciated studying Christian spirituality in a small Mennonite academic setting, as well as worshipping and fellowshipping with Christians from across the world." Margaret is married to Walter Sawatsky and they have two adult children. She is a member of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart. Her mother is Aganetha (Mrs. John F.) Warkentin of Rosenort, Man.

George Schmidt MDiv. *Not pictured* Will continue as acting academic dean of Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C. George and Karen, his wife, have three adult children. He is a member of West Abbotsford (B.C.) Mennonite Church. He previously earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree from AMBS and by additional study qualified for the Master of Divinity degree.

Carmen Schrock-Hurst MATS in Christian Spirituality. Plans in process. "I have been especially grateful for the friendships of students, faculty and staff who have affirmed, nurtured and challenged my gifts, call and growing faith." Carmen is married to Luke Schrock-Hurst and they have three children. She is a member of Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind. Her parents are Paul and June Schrock, Scottdale, Pa.

Gordon Scoville MDiv. Plans in process. "Being from non-Mennonite background, I have learned much from entering into conversation with Mennonite heritage."

Ten countries represented

Canada	14
United States	23
Argentina	1
Colombia	1
India	1
Japan	1
Korea	1
New Zealand	1
Switzerland	1
Taiwan	1

Gordon is married to Marie Scoville and is the son of Russell and Berniece Scoville, Wolf Point, Mont. He attends Bonneyville Mennonite Church, Bristol, Ind.

D. Scott Smith MAPS. *Not pictured* Therapist at Buckhorn (Ky.) Children's Center. Scott is married to Jennifer Smith and they have two children. His parents are Donald and Betty Joe Smith of New Carlisle, Ohio.

George Stoltzfus MATS in Christian Spirituality; theology and ethics. General secretary for the Mennonite Church. George, as a former medical doctor, found most meaningful "time for reflection, engagement with issues, spiritual insight, dedicated professors, student friends, and more." He is married to Mae Stoltzfus and they have two children. He is a member of Pinto Mennonite Church, Cumberland, Md.

Left to right: George Stoltzfus, Lynette Sumpter, John Troyer, Jonathan Wenger, Grace Yang, Earl Zimmerman

Steve Echols

Lynette Sumpter MDiv. Plans in process. "AMBS has been for me a community in which I have experienced healing, affirmation, challenge and growth." Lynette is a member of Pine Creek Church of the Brethren, North Liberty, Ind. Her parents are Richard and Helen Sumpter of North Liberty.

John M. Troyer MATS in theology and ethics. Will continue as a pastor at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, rural Goshen , Ind. "Two areas stand out from my time at AMBS: my summer as a student intern and my introduction to the thought of René Girard. I value the preparation I received here." John is married to Sheila Troyer and is the son of David and Mary Troyer, Middlebury, Ind.

Jonathan Wenger MATS in church history. Service Adventure Leader in Champaign, Ill. Jonathan is a member of Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., and is the son of Faith and James Wenger, Fresno.

Grace (An-Huei) Yang MATS in Biblical Studies. Plans in process. "The discussions in and out of the classrooms with faculty and students have enhanced my learning and challenged my thinking in the field of theology and Christian faith." Grace is the daughter of Ming-Chou (Joseph) Yang and Tze Wang (Judith) Yang of Taichung, Taiwan.

Earl Zimmerman MDiv. Pastor at Shalom Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., and pursue Ph.D. studies in theology at Catholic University, Washington, D.C. Earl found most meaningful "the opportunity to study with teachers who were significant mentors to me as well as the experience of Christian community at AMBS." He is married to Ruth Hoover Zimmerman and they have three children. His parents are Amos and the late Ada Barbara Zimmerman.

Commencement was a reunion of Helen Kruger and Margaret, her daughter. Helen, who graduated, had studied off-campus, while Margaret was a student at AMBS this year. Photo by Mary E. Klassen

AMBS Panorama

The fiftieth anniversary celebration at AMBS, April 26-28, was undergided by a 50-hour prayer vigil in the Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount. Marked with the lighting of a candle at the beginning of each hour, the vigil involved students, faculty and friends of the seminary in praying for the church and God's kingdom around the world.

The weekend celebrated the beginnings of Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago in 1945, and of Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1946 as part of Goshen College. Other activities included storytelling from different eras of the seminary's history, a reception for former faculty and staff, a choir for all who wanted to sing, and worship in area congregations on Sunday morning.

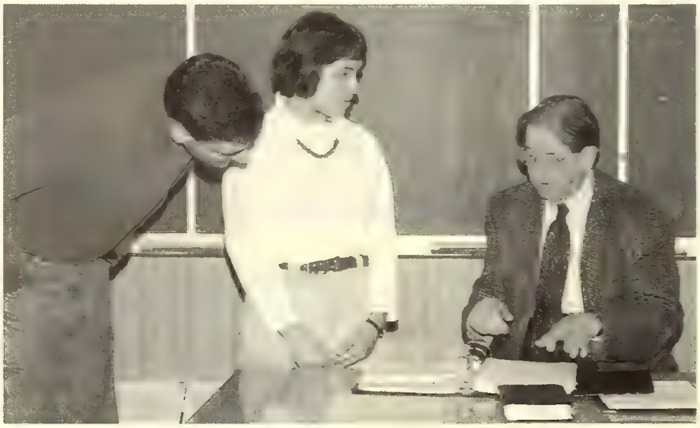
Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Ross T. Bender shared reminiscences of 26 years at AMBS in the closing forum of the school year. Ross retired at the end of the 1995-96 year, having served as dean from 1964-79, professor of Christian Education and Worship and director of the Institute of Mennonite Studies over a period of 34 years. He also served as president of Mennonite World Conference and pastor of Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo. Photo by Mary E. Klassen

It sounded like a choir the day 50 campus guests participated in a sample class session of "Foundations of Worship and Preaching." The guests came March 3-4 for Seminary Sampler, an open house for people exploring seminary studies. Mary Oyer (shown leading the singing), June Alliman Yoder, and Marlene Kropf led the class session.

Participants included groups from two Mennonite colleges, people exploring career changes, and some already involved in church work.

Photo by Mary E. Klassen



Paul M. Lederach presented a preaching lectureship at AMBS in February, focusing on expository preaching. He exhibited for students his personal study journal of the book of Romans. Through the years, he has kept notebooks of books of the Bible, documenting both his devotional life and his sermon studies. The result is his own personal commentary on each book of the Bible. Examining his Romans notebook are AMBS students Chris Palmer, Kalamazoo, Mich., and Maribeth Longacre, Barto, Pa.

Paul Lederach, an ordained minister in the Franconia Mennonite Conference, served that conference until recently as conference minister. Previously he served with Mennonite Publishing House from 1952-1978.

Paul and Mary, his wife, have created a Fund for Preaching at AMBS to encourage excellence in preaching and to enrich and expand opportunities to teach and develop preaching skills. Previous lecturers include Myron Augsburger, Dennis Hollinger and Eugene Lowry.

Photo by Gordon Janzen.

Preliminary financial report

Preaudited figures indicate that AMBS has balanced its budget for the fiscal year ending June 30. This result was possible through generous gifts from people and congregations throughout the year, especially as the fiscal year came to a close.

Inauguration scheduled

The inauguration of J. Nelson Kraybill as president of AMBS is scheduled for Sunday, March 16, 1997. Nelson will begins his duties at AMBS in January.

Featured presenter

John Shea will be the featured presenter at the 1997 AMBS Pastors' Week, January 27-30, with the theme, "Story shaping faith: The power of story in ministry."

Shea has lectured internationally on theology, ministry and storytelling. He has twenty years of experience as a parish priest and twenty years of experience as a professor of systematic theology at Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Ill.

During Pastors' Week, Shea will present three major lectures and he also will be featured in a public storytelling performance on Wednesday, January 29.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

July 1996
Printed in U.S.A.

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
Telephone 219 295-3726

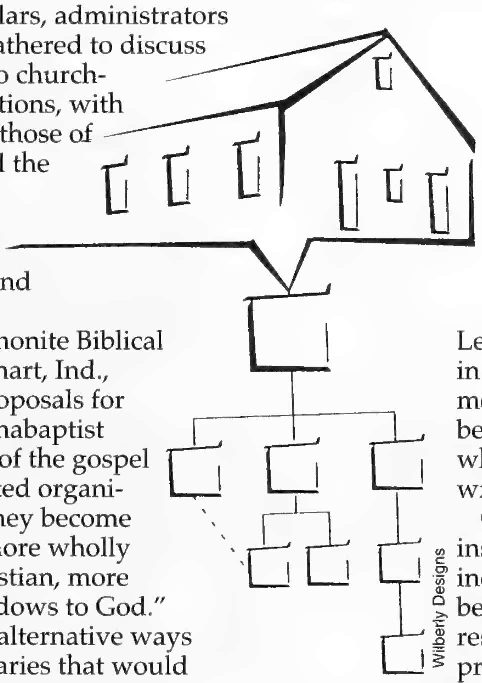
News

Mennos consider ideals vs. realities of institutions

Elizabethtown, Pa. (Meetinghouse)—"The real world of institutions is not hospitable to saints. … [It] is a world where one inevitably gets dirty hands."

Several other speakers echoed Ted Koontz's reflection on how dirty those hands have become—and maybe how to keep them a little cleaner—during the Church-Related Institutions Conference held June 13-15 at the Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College.

About 90 scholars, administrators and observers gathered to discuss issues relevant to church-related organizations, with special focus on those of Men-nonites and the Church of the Brethren.


Wilberly Designs

Koontz, professor of ethics and peace studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., made several proposals for incorporating Anabaptist understandings of the gospel into church-related organizations so that they become "more saintly, more wholly and deeply Christian, more transparent windows to God."

He suggested alternative ways to determine salaries that would shrink gaps between the highest- and lowest-paid employees. He also proposed that organizations give 1 percent of their budget to sister organizations in the Two-Thirds World.

Several speakers emphasized that a church institution is an arm of the church, not the church itself, because institutional relationships are organized through contracts rather than covenants. "Confusion about congregations as institutions clouds our organizational culture," said Alice Roth of Mennonite Board of Missions.

In Friday night's banquet address, titled "Leadership, Authority and Power," Rodney Sawatsky, president of Messiah College in Grantham, Pa., said that the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Brethren tend to view leadership more positively than do Mennonites because of their readier embrace of evangelicalism.

Sawatsky said that Scripture strongly affirms leadership, authority and power, and that frequent misuse of authority should not cause us to abandon it altogether. "[Successful] leadership is not primarily power over but empowering under," he said, adding that the challenge for leaders is recognizing the power they have and using it wisely.

Not everyone at the conference agreed on whether it is possible "to take the radical nature of the gospel and place it in institutions," as J. Nelson Kraybill said. "Or is that an oxymoron?" he asked, noting that both Jesus and John the Baptist worked outside of institutions.

J. Lawrence Burkholder, former president of Goshen (Ind.) College, said that institutions necessarily involve hierarchy, property, wealth, exercise of authority, bureaucracy and power. Leading an organization in today's climate may mean "living somewhere between the ideal and what is … absolutely wrong."

Other tensions in institutional work include the pull between being prophetic and responding to market pressures and between participatory decision-making and efficiency.

Scholars of history, sociology and theology, and administrators and staff of church-related organizations presented papers. These centered on themes such as health-care institutions, the church-relatedness of Brethren colleges, mutual aid structures and professional pressures.

In a final panel discussion, John Lapp, executive director of Mennonite

Inside the news

Ukrainians want to talk about Christianity / p. 14

Three colleges move toward joining forces / p. 16

MCC Canada approves downsizing / p. 16

Northern District Conference report / p. 18

New staff members at GCMC offices / p. 20

Mennonite Economic Development Association began its first work in Paraguay in 1953, helping dislocated Mennonites start dairy herds, a tannery and a shoe factory. Now MEDA's work has come full circle as 26 Paraguayan Mennonite businesspeople have officially formed their own branch of MEDA, with one of its goals being to work at forming business-oriented economic development projects for low-income Paraguayans.

• • •

The Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church has announced that the ministerial credentials of John Howard Yoder, one of the leading Mennonite theologians of recent decades, will remain suspended. The suspension began in 1992 after confirmation of allegations that Yoder "abused appropriate sexual boundaries with several women." The decision not to reinstate the credentials was made by mutual agreement between Yoder and the conference. This concludes the disciplinary process begun at the time of the suspension of credentials.

Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre now has a year-round discussion of theology on the internet in conjunction with Menno-Link. TMTC also has a World Wide Web page (http.www.chass.utoronto. ca:8080/~dculp.tmtc.html) that maintains a list of Mennonite scholars along with their research interests.

• • •

The Brazilian Mennonite Church is considering a proposal to send four mission workers to Mozambique after a request from churches there. Brazilian Mennonite Church leader Antonio Carlos de Faria has asked the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions to contribute to the project.

• • •

The 30th Ontario Mennonite Relief Sale, held the last weekend in May at New Hamburg, raised $242,000 Cdn., up $16,000 from last year. A quilt pieced by Emily Hunsberger and quilted by Erb Street Mennonite Church women especially for the sale brought in $7,500. In addition, visitors bought $23,500 worth of merchandise from Self-Help Crafts, and the first House Against Hunger project in Waterloo County raised $80,000. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. executive committee, meeting April 26-27 in Hindman, Ky., approved a $750,000 above-budget plan to build new regional facilities for MCC Central States in North Newton, Kan., on land donated for that purpose. The new building will provide more work space for volunteers, a more versatile warehouse facility and a place to host seminars, workshops and other MCC activities. The Central States board is committed to raising $400,000 for the project, with $250,000 coming from MCC, $50,000 from MCC U.S. and $50,000 from the sale of the current Central States facilities in North Newton.

Central Committee, and Nancy Heisey, graduate student at Temple University, noted several "nitty-gritty" issues that in their opinions deserved more attention at the conference: institutional racism, economic issues, downsizing, competitiveness and duplication.

Heisey said that the future of church-related organizations looks different because ethnic "minorities" are minorities no longer in many parts of the church. Becoming more responsive to those away from the centers of power will require constant examination of "whether we are really seeing things properly," said Lapp.

"Institutions do not make our decisions; people do."

Lee Snyder

In the closing address, Lee Snyder, future president of Bluffton (Ohio) College, outlined a vision for institutions as servants.

The "lofty heights and cosmic mystery" of institutions will always influence the work of staffs and boards of church-related organizations, she said. To hope that institutions can be virtuous means to recognize that "institutions do not make our decisions; people do."

The conference began the process of "broad-based rethinking," as Sawatsky said, and of filling "a great gap in our ethical thought," as Koontz put it, about an Anabaptist theology of organizations.

"Despite the pervasiveness of institutions in the life of our churches today, we have scarcely begun a careful reflection on our church-related institutions and how our faith bears on them," said Koontz. *Valerie Weaver*

Swan Lake Christian Camp, Viborg, S.D., invites applications for a full-time **director** position to begin Sept. 1. Seeking couple or single person. Salary set according to conference guidelines.

Please send resume to **Dave Waldowski, 2213 S. Oxford Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106; (605) 361-2514 or (605) 336-9189.**

Ukrainians want to talk about Christianity

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Some Ukrainians "have turned away from religion because they are struggling to survive," says Peter Rempel. "But others are seeking answers to questions they have about God and the direction of their lives."

Rempel is secretary for Europe and the former Soviet Union for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church. He visited Ukraine in May.

Susan and Peter Kehler, COM workers in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, told Rempel how a salesperson was eager to talk with them about Christianity when she found out they were providing leadership to a church. The couple, from Abbotsford, B.C., and members of Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, B.C., noted that customers waiting in line behind them also seemed interested in their conversation.

The curiosity about religion, Rempel says, is likely due to the fact that people had little freedom to discuss faith-related issues when they lived under communism.

The majority of people who attend the Mennonite fellowship in Zaporozhye, where the Kehlers are leaders, are drawn to the worship services because they want to reconnect with their religious and cultural heritage, says Rempel.

Zaporozhye is located in an area where Mennonites first settled in 1789. Today it has a population of about 900,000. Average attendance at the Mennonite worship service is 30.

Most who attend the fellowship, which began meeting in August 1994, have only retained bits and pieces of their Mennonite upbringing. For example, some remember little more than the German words for a prayer or Bible passage that was often used during their childhood years. Their favorite hymn is "Gott ist die Liebe."

Yet, despite the fact that many are not fluent in their native language, worship services are conducted for the most part in German and then translated into Russian.

"Their interest in recovering the German language and culture awakened them to the possibility of reestablishing a Mennonite church in which they could meet their spiritual needs," says Rempel.

He notes that the group of Mennonites in Zaporozhye indicated that they have often felt like outsiders in the Ukrainian culture. They said they have been called fascists and have experienced discrimination at work because of their German background.

"This is a neglected flock in the larger Mennonite family. They want to reconnect with their spiritual faith and have asked for our help. We need to be with them," says Rempel. *Carla Reimer*

'The church is all we have for our souls'

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—As Peter Rempel traveled through rural Ukraine in May, he saw field upon field of newly planted wheat.

This country, about the size of Saskatchewan, has abundant agricultural resources. But, Rempel learned, its urban residents often must scrounge for food and other household goods. He saw children begging on the street and retirees rummaging in garbage bins for scraps.

Susan and Peter Kehler, who provide leadership to the Mennonite fellowship in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, told Rempel that when they suggested taking the bus to visit a church member, some participants said they would rather walk because one bus fare equals the cost of a loaf of bread.

The physical infrastructure is in dire shape. Thousands of partially completed homes, begun soon after Ukraine's independence, stand empty. Rising inflation and the devaluation of the country's currency have halted most construction projects, Rempel says.

Criminal activities have increased as people try to support themselves through illegal means. The government appears to have little power to enforce the laws, he says.

In addition to their economic woes, Ukrainians face political instability. The government has made Ukrainian the official language, an action that could lead to internal conflicts, says Rempel, noting that in the eastern part of Ukraine most people speak Russian. The current redrafting of the constitution, which may involve the naming of a state church, has also added to the uncertainty.

With all the turmoil around them, Mennonites in Zaporozhye continue to immigrate to Germany, says Rempel. The original chair of the Mennonite fellowship, Heinz Janzen, left in mid-April. His successor, Vladimir Tiessen, plans to go in a few years.

However, for individuals such as Oleg and Alexandra Penner, the Mennonite group offers them sustenance that money can't buy. "The church is all we have for our souls," says Oleg. "We will come even if all others are gone and we are the only ones left." *Carla Reimer*

Sustenance that money can't buy: *From left are mission workers Mary Raber of Mennonite Central Committee, Walter Bergen of MCC and the Commission on Overseas Mission, Peter Kehler of COM, and local church members Alexandra and Oleg Penner.*

Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio, held its first Family Celebration Weekend May 31-June 2. The event kicked off with an ice cream social, intergenerational cooperative games and an introduction to the resource persons, Jim and Susan Vogt of Covington, Ky., co-directors of Parenting for Peace and Justice. The Vogts gave several workshops on Saturday and brought the message and children's time to Sunday worship. (Grace *Messenger*)

● ● ●

Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, a dually affiliated congregation, will buy the former Mennonite Central Committee Atlanta unit house in the interracial Grant Park neighborhood in order to begin a hospitality ministry in September. MCC will sell the house to AMF at half its market value in order to continue and extend the Mennonite commitment to justice ministries in Atlanta. Several members of AMF will live in the house as an intentional community, providing up to three rooms for people with short-term housing needs, such as people who are homeless, recently released from prison or new to the city. AMF is currently trying to raise the down payment on the house. To contribute, contact Patty King, 303 Augusta Ave., Atlanta, GA 30312; (404) 635-1005.

● ● ●

The Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College invites submission of papers for a conference entitled "Anabaptists in Conversation: Mennonite and Brethren Interactions with Theologies in the 20th Century," to be held June 19-21, 1997. Papers may explore influences on Mennonite and/or Brethren thought from others' theologies, or vice versa, or both. Deadline for proposal submissions is Dec. 1. Send proposals and requests for information to June 1997 Conference, The Young Center, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022-2298; (717) 361-1470; fax (717) 361-1443; e-mail youngctr@acad.etown. edu.

Gregory Jackson of Spivey's Corners, N.C., won the 1996 National Hollerin' Contest held there in June with a yelled rendition of *Amazing Grace*. The victory makes Jackson the contest's first three-time winner. He won the 1992 and 1994 titles. When the contest started in 1968, its founder thought it would be a one-time event just for fun. (*Associated Press*)

• • •

The headline in the *Red River Valley Echo* (Altona, Man.) blared "David Iftody Votes Against Sexual Orientation." The Member of Parliament from a largely Mennonite riding actually voted against an amendment to add the words "sexual orientation" to the part of the Canadian Human Rights Act that prohibits discrimination. He was the only Liberal MP to oppose the amendment. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

An eight-member Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation to Haiti June 8-19 concluded its time in Port-au-Prince with a prayer vigil urging the U.S. government to turn over captured documents with the names of people who persecuted and killed more than 5,000 Haitians during the period of military rule. The CPT group walked from the U.S. Embassy to the Haitian Palace of Justice, about two kilometers, to symbolically return "boxes of documents" to Haiti's legal administration.

• • •

Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church will host a day-long conference called "No Longer Alone" on Oct. 5. Keynote speaker is John Toews, who wrote *No Longer Alone*, a book from Herald Press that explores the relationship between mental health and faith. The conference will include panel and group discussion and worship, led by people who have experienced mental illness themselves or within their families. Registration is $15 U.S. and covers lunch and snacks. Call (717) 270-2400 (1-800-308-6030 in Pennsylvania) by Sept. 27 to register.

Three colleges move closer to joining forces

Winnipeg (*Mennonite Reporter*)—The vision for three Mennonite colleges here joining together has moved closer to reality.

Earlier this year, Concord College, Menno Simons College and Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) each appointed representatives to a "federation committee," which then created eight subcommittees.

"One of the critical steps is having subcommittees actually beginning to work," says CMBC president John H. Neufeld. "There is much more detail now being processed."

Reg Toews, who is not associated with any one college, chairs the federation committee. The committee plans to hire a staff person soon.

Faculty from all three colleges have met several times since May 1994 to discuss increasing cooperation, most recently on June 6.

The 22 faculty dealt with three questions: What are the essential components of the vision for the proposed school? What would the structure and program of studies be like? What are the chief concerns (fears)?

The faculty members agreed they wanted a planning retreat with the larger federation committee to work at vision and academic program, and building a spirit of cooperation. This will take place Aug. 22.

Critical to the federation process is the conversation with the provincial government over the purchase of the land and heritage building, currently the Manitoba School for the Deaf, across the street from CMBC.

The government relations subcommittee wants to present a statement of vision and sketch of programs to the government before the end of 1996.

Art DeFehr of Concord, who chairs that six-member subcommittee, is carefully optimistic about negotiations with the government.

"They've had difficulty finding an appropriate use for the heritage building in the last number of years," he says. "They would consider ours an excellent way to use the building long term."

But timing is complicated. The colleges cannot take major action without board and constituency approval. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada owns CMBC. Concord College is sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren conferences in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Menno Simons is operated by an association called "Friends of Menno Simons College." *Aiden Schlichting Enns, Manitoba provincial editor*

MCC Canada exec approves downsizing

Winnipeg (MCCC)—A restructuring process launched last November at Mennonite Central Committee Canada's annual meeting moved closer to conclusion at the agency's executive committee meeting, held May 31-June 1.

In November 1995, representatives from supporting conferences and provincial MCC organizations agreed to reduce MCC Canada's budget by about $300,000 for fiscal year 1997-98 and shift some responsibilities from MCC Canada to the provincial MCC organizations.

According to Dale Taylor, associate executive director, the decision reflects MCC Canada's commitment to send 60 percent of donations overseas and to cut duplication between the Winnipeg and provincial offices.

At the most recent meeting, the executive followed up the November decision by approving a plan to reduce MCC Canada's budget by $336,000, effective September 1997. This means a loss of 4.5 positions, two in human resources and 2.5 in Canadian programs. Provincial MCC organizations will assume tasks such as receiving and processing applications and approving candidates for service.

Canadian programs include Native Concerns, Women's Concerns, Victim-Offender Ministries, Employment Development, Refugee Concerns, Mental Health and Disability Concerns and Peace and Social Concerns. The effects of downsizing "will be significant but not immediate," said Taylor. "In most areas, staffing at the national level will be reduced and services refocused to take into account the activities of the provincial MCCs."

She added that the national peace witness of MCC will be strengthened, "to ensure that MCC continues to reflect and foster the biblical vision of the Anabaptist tradition."

For executive committee member Betty Lynn Enns, Kitchener, Ont., the decision was difficult but essential. "We need to bring the work of MCC closer to our supporting churches," she said. "We need to involve our supporters as much as possible in our programs in Canada."

Enns emphasized that the changes are not "strictly related to funding. This is also a philosophical shift in the way we do things."

Executive committee member Abe Wiebe, Winkler, Man., added that MCC has not decreased its commitment to issues facing Native people, the unemployed, refugees, disabled people and others. "We are just going to do our work in different settings and in a different way," he said. "The work will go on."

Gloria Nafziger coordinates Refugee Concerns for MCC Canada and MCC Ontario. Her husband was laid off by a Canadian relief and development agency that downsized last year.

"It was handled very poorly," said Nafziger. "Staff had little input in the discussion and no information about what was happening. People who lost their jobs had a lot of anger."

By contrast, she said, MCC Canada "is doing a much better job of including staff. It's been a more humane process."

Nafziger added, "I think we've been kept informed about what's happening. It's been a fair and open process. I think most of us realize that the agency has to make some pretty serious decisions and that we need to find ways to adjust to the new realities."

Nafziger's role as staff person for MCC Canada and a provincial MCC is one prototype of how MCC activity in Canada may be structured in the future. "I think that I'm more effective in my national role because of my involvement at a local level with a provincial MCC," she said.

Kendall Harder is a member of MCC Canada's staff council, which has been helping staff deal with the changes. "There is anger and pain, but I think most staff are thinking about how they can work in the new framework," he said.

Some staff, however, worry that the changes will limit the agency's ability to assist marginalized people in Canada. *John Longhurst*

Journalist finds Mennonite hero

Julie Oliver

Last summer, Don Cayo (third from left in photo), editorial page editor for *The New Brunswick Reader*, traveled with photographer Julie Oliver to Haiti, Peru and Brazil for six weeks in search of heroes. They reported on the work of five women from New Brunswick who have devoted their lives to the service of God and the poor. One of these women was Margaret De Jong (holding a girl on her lap), a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Bwadlorens, a remote village in Haiti. Margaret lives with the villagers (among them these kids from her neighborhood) and works as a nurse.

Leaders from the Brethren in Christ and the Mennonite Brethren met April 19-20 to explore possibilities of networking and resourcing between the two denominations. The group explored issues such as pastoral training, sharing theological instructors and joint participation in service programs.

• • •

One artist's vision for a symbol representing the merged Mennonite denomination can be seen at Goshen (Ind.) College. Ann Graber Miller, assistant professor of art, created a logo including a dove, flame and fish. The exhibit, "In Search of a Mennonite Symbol," continues through Aug. 15 in the college art gallery, located in the library basement. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Spurgeon's College in London is offering a master's degree in Baptist and Anabaptist studies through a distance learning format. The program explores the origins of Anabaptism, Anabaptist and Baptist theology, and church and society in both traditions. Write Ian Randall, Spurgeon's College, 189 South Norwood Hill, London SE25 6DJ, U.K. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Mennonite World Conference reports that Martin Luther's personal Bible, filled with notes from the reformer himself, was found recently in a library in Stuttgart, Germany. The Latin Bible was printed in 1519 in Lyons, France. Luther apparently used it in 1521-23 when preparing his translation of the New Testament and the Pentateuch into German. A Spanish Catholic theologian discovered the Bible, which had been in the library unrecognized since 1784. Three experts have testified that the Bible was Luther's. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill., is preparing a picture gallery of current and former pastors. The church requests help in locating pictures of these men: Peter Guegerich or Guengerich, served 1868-1880; Jacob Unsicker, served 1869-1883; David Augspurger, served 1888-1892. Please contact Secretary, Calvary Mennonite Church, 126 E. Adams St., Washington, IL 61571.

• • •

The *Defense Monitor* reports that 54 percent of respondents to a poll conducted in the United States last fall agreed that defense spending should be cut to help reduce the federal budget deficit. Fifty-six percent indicated their support for a 20 percent cut in military spending. Seventy-two percent said they would support a 20 percent cut if the savings would be redirected to improving education, fighting crime and cutting the budget deficit. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The government of Alberta has invited Mennonites in Edmonton to develop a Christian-based support community for families at risk of having children removed from the home by Social Services. Mike Cardinal, former Minister of Family and Social Services, issued the initial invitation. He thought of Mennonites because of his personal experience as a teenager in Calling Lake, Alta., where he enjoyed the friendship of voluntary service workers sent by Mennonite Board of Missions. He gives much credit for his becoming the first Aboriginal cabinet minister in Alberta to the mentoring of VS workers early in his life. A research team is now working at examining models of this kind of community around North America, discussing recruitment of volunteers with Mennonite agencies, consulting with social service workers and developing staffing structures and policies.
Melita Rempel-Burkholder

NDC passes resolution on church burnings

Freeman, S.D. (GCMC)—Stewardship and a resolution against the burning of church buildings in the southern United States highlighted the annual meeting of Northern District Conference (NDC) here June 13-16.

The 207 participants heard keynote speaker Lynn Miller, a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) worker in Chicago, talk about being "Stewards of God's Mysteries."

Using his trademark humor, Miller pointed out traditional Mennonite attitudes toward money. God's method of stewardship isn't about buying items on sale or making "a good deal," he said. Instead God's way is to give more than requested.

Miller challenged participants to present themselves to the world as offerings, instead of acting as consumers. He added, "Time is much more expensive than money."

Alberto Quintela of St. Paul, Minn., initiated a resolution in response to the recent burnings of church buildings in the southern United States.

Some people raised questions about the resolution's racial focus, pointing out that not all the buildings that have been burned are owned by blacks.

One participant asked, "Is this not a spiritual battle? We don't know for sure that it is racially motivated."

Helen Quintela, St. Paul, responded, "Racism is a spiritual problem."

Alberto Quintela said, "We do not have the evidence, but we do know that the churches are [predominantly] African-American, and there is a pattern which makes it a racial issue. Can we not stand beside them and let them know we don't want this to happen?"

Willis Busenitz, Busby, Mont., shared his own struggle relating to the Native American community. "I wish I could tell people that white supremacists are non-Christians. But I can't explain it that way because many carry the Christian flag and say Jesus is their Lord."

After the resolution passed, someone asked, "What can we do?" Suggestions included supporting the NDC young people planning to go on a Mennonite Disaster Service trip to Alabama to help rebuild a church there; being aware of further needs in the South, such as helping to refurnish a rebuilt church; distributing the resolution through bulletin inserts and the conference newsletter.

NDC president Steve Ratzlaff asked the peace and social concerns committee to follow this issue. Geri Butkus, Freeman, S.D., said, "There is racism right here in the Northern District, and maybe this could be a starting point to look at what is in our own hearts and minds."

NDC continues to struggle with increasing needs and declining funds. Total giving by NDC congregations in the 1995-96 fiscal year was down about $30,000 from the previous year. This was made up in part, however, by some unexpected gifts from the Mennonite Foundation and several individuals.

> ***"I wish I could tell people that white supremacists are non-Christians. But I can't because many carry the Christian flag and say Jesus is their Lord."***
>
> **Willis Busenitz**

In spite of the downward trend in giving, delegates approved a 1996-97 budget of $248,000, an $11,000 increase over last year.

Delegates adopted the statement "Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love" for use in congregations. Busenitz said, "Maybe we need to get more proactive with this and draw attention to it in the life of the congregation, and not just pull it out when we're in a tight spot."

Committee on the ministry chair John Kroeker noted the committee's concern about pastors coming into the district from other denominations who are hired by NDC churches but refuse to be licensed or ordained by the committee. These pastors often have little accountability to NDC.

In the past year the committee on the ministry offered a training event for deacons, with close to 30 attending, and set up an intervention team to process cases of clergy accused of misconduct.

To help promote mission and service opportunities, NDC invited Kristin Epp and Mary Franz from the Dallas (Texas) MVS unit to "come home" and share about their experiences as volunteers. Franz and Epp briefly addressed the delegate body and led an afternoon workshop.

Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church members reported their excitement about the establishment of an MVS unit in Sioux Falls in the near future.

The MVS unit in St. Paul was temporarily shut down due to a shortage of volunteers. Helen Quintela reported that MVS is now in the process of placing six adults and three children.

Busenitz expressed gratitude for NDC church contributions to the Jubilee fund, which enabled the White River Cheyenne congregation in Busby, Mont., to use the Jubilee curriculum in its Sunday school classes.

The peace and social concerns committee sponsored a book wrap design contest during 1995-96. Many schools require textbooks to be wrapped to keep them in good shape. Military recruitment offices distribute free book wraps to students. In response, the committee challenged NDC youth to design book wraps that promote peace. Winning designs will be duplicated and given out to youth in the district.

Conference participants enjoyed the second annual home missions banquet, with the United Hmong Mennonite Church of St. Paul and New Hope Mennonite Church of Omaha, Neb., as the featured church plants.

The Saturday evening feature was a presentation of "Unspoken for Time," a dramatic portrayal of how sexual abuse affects individuals, families and communities, first presented at a domestic violence workshop held in Sioux Falls in March.

Bethesda Mennonite Church of Henderson, Neb., offered to host the 1997 NDC sessions.

In evaluating this annual meeting, some expressed concern about its appeal to youth. Brad Carlson, conference youth minister, said NDC last attempted a youth conference in 1993, and it ended in substantial financial loss due to poor turnout. Youth have to choose between the conference sessions and activities such as camps, service trips and jobs, he said.

However, Carlson stressed the importance of having youth involved with NDC business rather than being separate from the adults.

Elisabeth Harder, Mountain Lake, Minn., one of the youth delegates, said she found the conference interesting and beneficial. "Not all of us think we have to be entertained," she said.
Shella Franz

Resolution against burning churches

We … decry the violence that has led to the destruction of African-American and other churches in the United States.

We recognize that the act of burning a church building is a deliberate attempt to destroy not merely a building, but the souls of those who worship there. We are compelled to respond to this violence against property and soul.

We are a peace church rooted in a deep belief and long history of nonviolent resolution to conflict.

We pledge our support in rebuilding the church facilities as a symbolic act to show those who do the burning that we cannot be bystanders to racial hatred and to let those congregations know that they are not alone in their loss and grief.

We encourage Mennonite Disaster Service to continue to help in the rebuilding of these places of worship … and we ask our church members to join hand-in-hand in this task.

We express our concern that the flames of racial hatred continue to rise, resulting in the destruction of places of worship.

We pray for the congregations, that God will bind them together and strengthen their faith even more.

We pray for those who did the burning, that they might find God's love within themselves, that it may grow and replace the hatred in their hearts.

We call upon all of God's people to join us in common prayer and in peaceful action; to speak boldly against these hateful acts and to take all peaceful action necessary to stop this senseless violence and to bring about God's reign on earth. *Adopted June 1996 by Northern District Conference*

The Vision: Healing and Hope committee met June 6-7 in Baltimore to discuss further ways of encouraging congregations, area conferences and churchwide groups to embrace the vision statement adopted at Wichita '95 last summer. The committee is inviting submissions of musical compositions using the words from the vision statement. These may be sent to General Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 or to the Mennonite Church General Board in Elkhart, Ind.

• • •

The second annual assembly of Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference took place June 20-23 in San Diego. PSMC formed two years ago when the southern portion of the Pacific District Conference (General Conference Mennonite Church) and the Southwest Mennonite Conference (Mennonite Church) merged. Mark Vincent of Elkhart, Ind., director of The Giving Project, spoke on "Living Faithfully," drawing from 1 Peter 1:4-11. Delegates approved a budget of $126,000, a 3.5 percent decrease from last year, while affirming an increase from one-third to one-half time for each of the three area ministers. In order to support the decision financially, they voted to eliminate the conference coordinator position, which is currently vacant. Worship services reflected the diversity present within PSMC, where languages spoken in congregations include Spanish, Hmong, Dutch, Navajo, Hopi, Mandarin, Cantonese and Timor, as well as English. The peace and justice committee presented an award honoring the vision of Elmer Miller, who died unexpectedly last spring. Miller was instrumental in creating the House of Refuge, a program for homeless men in Phoenix.

For generations, the people of the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu have celebrated the yam harvest by jumping off wooden towers with vines tied around their legs. Now that bungee jumping has become so popular, the Vanuatu government claims it is entitled to royalties on the earnings of bungee jump operators for copying Vanuatu's cultural tradition. They seek an agreement with "a relevant international organization" to ensure that Vanuatu gets it share from bungee-jumping operations worldwide. (*Windows East and West*)

• • •

Meeting jointly for the first time since 1993, Central District Conference (General Conference Mennonite Church) and Ohio Conference (Mennonite Church) held their annual conference assemblies June 21-23 at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Delegates heard a report from members of the Integration Committee for the GCMC and MC. Also speaking to delegates were the retiring president of Bluffton College, Elmer Neufeld, and the incoming president, Lee Snyder. CDC delegates learned that their new conference minister will be Lloyd Miller, currently on the pastoral team at Waterford (Ind.) Mennonite Church, and heard a report from the human sexuality task force. The task force is preparing a study kit that will be available from the conference office in November. CDC also recognized Eileen Kehler, retiring after 21 years as conference secretary. All conference participants were invited to visit the Peace Factory, an interactive exhibit which was featured last summer at Wichita '95. They also enjoyed a Sunday worship service planned by the approximately 100 youth and sponsors who attended a youth leadership training workshop held at the same time as the conference assembly.

New staff begin work at GC office

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The General Conference Mennonite Church announces three new staff appointments made recently to the central office.

Doug Krehbiel, Newton, Kan., is half-time director for peace and justice resources for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

Krehbiel

The position includes working with other organizations to develop a peace training program for use in congregations, coordinating a counseling network for conscientious objectors and promoting resources.

"I've been involved in peacemaking for 20 years," says Krehbiel. "It's exciting for me to have a job where I will be able to work with peace issues at a conference level."

Krehbiel has a bachelor's degree in social work from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He was youth minister at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., 1991-96. During the same time, he was also assistant manager at Mirror Valley Retreat, White Pigeon, Mich.

In 1980, Krehbiel and Jude, his wife, started Road Less Travelled, a music ministry project committed to promoting peace, justice and environmental stewardship. They are members of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton.

Gilberto Flores, San Antonio, Texas, has been appointed director of Hispanic ministries for CHM, effective July 25. He replaces Marco Guete, who has accepted a position in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Flores

Flores will direct a Spanish-language leadership training program, provide resources and counsel to Hispanic church planting in Canada and the United States, and serve as the director of the Association of Hispanic Mennonite Churches.

For the past three years Flores has been a church planter and pastor at Fuente de Vida in San Antonio. His work has been supported by Rosedale Mennonite Mission, Irwin, Ohio, which is affiliated with the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

Prior to his time in San Antonio, Flores lived in Guatemala, where he was president of the Guatemalan Mennonite Church. He also served as academic dean of the Latin American Anabaptist seminary program in Central America, known as SEMILLA, and director of a theological training program at a distance.

Flores and Rosa Elena, his wife, have four children.

The Commission on Education has appointed Dennis Good, Upland, Calif., to a new position as director of operations for Faith & Life Press (FLP) effective mid-July.

Good

Good was most recently president and chief financial officer for a mortgage banking business in Riverside, Calif. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Iowa.

As director of operations, Good will supervise the editorial, production, sales and distribution functions for FLP. He also will manage the finance and production division.

"Recent events in my life and business experience have awakened my interest in becoming more involved in church administration. During this time, I have spent much time in prayer. I believe this is the opportunity to service to which God is calling me," says Good.

He has also been a bookkeeper for Mennonite Central Committee, pastor at Washington (Iowa) Mennonite Church and a real-estate broker.

Good and Dorcas Lady Good, his wife, are members of the Alta Loma (Calif.) Brethren in Christ Church. They have three adult sons.

Going to college?

Ask about our student rates.

Call 1-800-757-5101.

WORKERS

Lois and **Paul Dyck**, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, are serving a short-term assignment with Allegheny Conference, working at the International Guest House in Washington.

Kim and **Phil Friesen**, St. Paul, Minn., began a short-term assignment in Argentina with the Commission on Overseas Mission on July 20, relating to the Argentina Taiwanese Mennonite Church in Buenos Aires. They previously served with COM in Taiwan for about 10 years.

Marvin Friesen, Carman, Man., has been named principal and head administrator of Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.

Ron Garber, Hesston, Kan., will be director of Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus beginning in 1997. He succeeds **Jona Baltzer**, Moundridge, Kan.

Arthur Jost, Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, received the Anabaptist Health Care Award from Mennonite Mental Health Services for his 50 years of service in mental health.

Katie Marshall, Rainbow Church, Kansas City, Kan., was appointed administrative assistant for Mennonite Voluntary Service beginning July 1.

Myrna Miller, Chicago, has been named assistant principal of Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.

Mahlon Lambright, an Amish man from Wisconsin, was offered $212,000 as an insurance settlement in connection with his wife's death, reports *Pastor's Weekly Briefing*. Lambright refused the money, saying he was afraid such wealth would make his family reject its values. (*AFA Journal*)

• • •

The publishers of *Hymnal: A Worship Book* have produced a new version with changes that correct inaccuracies, add information not known in 1992 when the hymnal first came out, correct inconsistencies in style and make indexes easier to use. The new version is compatible with all previous ones. No hymns or worship resources have been added, deleted or changed in order. The hymnal and related products can be ordered from Faith & Life Press, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; 1-800-743-2484.

Bethel College Mennonite Church seeks applicants for the position of **associate pastor**. This is a full-time position providing leadership in preaching, worship planning, teaching and pastoral care with an emphasis in Christian education.

The ideal candidate will have seminary training, preferably an M.Div., with a strong commitment to Mennonite theology, including pacifism. We are looking for an individual with enthusiasm, energy and an openness that supports relationships with Sunday school teachers and participants in the Christian education program. Sensitivity to questions and needs of older adults will be an asset.

Send letter of interest to **Susan Rhoades, c/o Bethel College Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 364, North Newton, KS 67117**.

Director of financial assistance: 12-month, full-time position. Master's degree required. Experience in student services staff supervision, public relations, administration and office management. Manage all aspects of student financial assistance. Represents financial assistance issues in the development of recruitment and retention strategies for all university programs. Application deadline: **Aug. 30**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant. Multiethnic people and women and are especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **Eastern Mennonite University Human Resources Office, (540) 432-4108; e-mail: ebybj@emu.edu**.

Holy Lands with Mennonite World Conference

Tour Leaders: Jacob and Lillian Elias, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Date: Dec. 26, 1996, to Jan. 16, 1997

Cost: $3,598 U.S. from Chicago

For a detailed brochure call Tara at
1-800-635-0963
Menno Travel Service, Goshen, Ind.

The Courage Not to Fight

Peace was in Their Hearts

By **Richard C. Anderson**

Twelve thousand men during World War II acted on their beliefs and became conscientious objectors. This is a moving chronicle of opinion and achievement by those who refused to go to the killing fields of war. An inspiring account of:

- — the passion of their convictions
- — their work in Civilian Public Service
- — their frustrations, challenges, and triumphs
- — the logic of their "impossible ideal"

Paper, 318 pages, $17.95; in Canada $25.75.

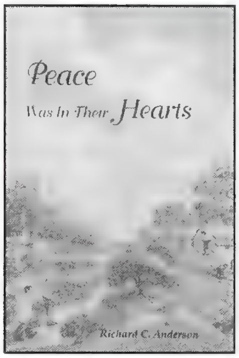
Available through your local bookstore or by calling
1 800 759-4447.

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com http://www.mph.lm.com/hp.html



Reviews

BOOKS

TEACHING CHILDREN PEACE

Raising Peaceful Children in a Violent World *by Nancy Lee Cecil with Patricia L. Roberts (LuraMedia, 1995, 253 pages)*

Reviewed by Jeanne Houser, Newton, Kan.

"Contrary to popular belief, peace is *not* the absence of conflict," says Cecil as she introduces a treasury of wisdom, activities and resources aimed at empowering children to deal creatively with conflict. Cecil divides the book into three major sections: peaceful communication, peaceful entertainment and peaceful relationships.

Peaceful communication includes affirming one another, sharing feelings peacefully, celebrating diversity and confronting stereotypes. Cecil provides thought-provoking questions to enable readers to examine their own attitudes and behaviors. The 55 family activities are clear, concise and broken down into manageable steps. Although geared for family use, many may be easily adapted for classroom or Sunday school.

Families will want to decide what fits them. A family role play may be too intimidating or a family peace meeting too time-consuming. Many ideas are simple (post-it notes for affirmation), and the issues Cecil raises can always be discussed at the supper table or in the car.

Cecil's ideas on resolving conflicts include well-known ones, such as talking it over or walking away, but she also addresses underlying attitudes toward conflicts: "If we think of conflict as a test of right and wrong … a winner and a loser, conflict becomes a negative, highly threatening phenomenon that is both anxiety-producing and detrimental." Cecil is not afraid to address the difficulty many nonviolent families face in deciding how to discipline.

The peaceful entertainment section gives suggestions for TV, toys and literature (and an extensive bibliography). Cecil mentions organizations working to reduce violence on TV.

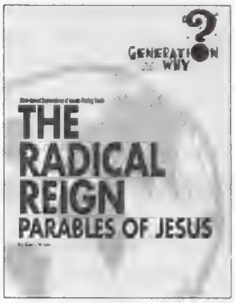
The section on peaceful relationships addresses many parents' worry that children are exposed to too much global pain already. "Our children need to be reminded … that even the tiniest step toward a cooperative, peaceful solution is far better than merely recognizing the pain of others and doing nothing at all." Cecil advises small, realistic actions. Parents and teachers who are looking for such help will definitely find it in this book.

CONNECT YOUTH WITH BIBLE

The Radical Reign: Parables of Jesus *by Gary Wilde and* **You Can't Make Me Go to Church: The Church of Acts** by Eddy Hall *(each Faith & Life Press, 1995, 40 pages)*

Reviewed by Marlene Bogard, Newton, Kan.

These two new studies from the Generation Why? curriculum assist teens in testing out their questions about faith. The teaching philosophy of each session carrying the lesson from life to the Bible and back to life provides an important framework for youth to make connections from biblical passages to their own situations.



Each piece contains six and five lessons, respectively, with an extender lesson that can be used to accommodate the diversity of congregational scheduling. The page layout includes plenty of white space, which is handy for making additional notes in the margins. Many pages feature helpful sidebars that comment on what Generation Y thinks and fears, so teachers can fine tune their preparation to fit the group.

Different styles of learning are encouraged, including movement, problem solving, tasting, touching, smelling and hearing. After a lesson that included an activity on siphoning (in *The Radical Reign*), a creative but unusual teaching activity, one student reported to teacher Myron Voth of Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., that "it was a really good lesson." Positive comments from youth are always a delight and serve to remind us that students may glean a morsel of insight in ways we have not planned for.

Voth, who has taught both studies, says, "It is really important for the teacher to know the kids and what they may connect with in terms of the lesson activities." Voth also feels free

TOURMAGINATION
MEXICO '96
November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

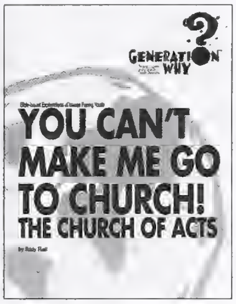
22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

to use various ideas in the lessons as springboards to activities that he knows the kids will really connect with. "We have to trust that the biblical message will connect with some kids on some days, but not every activity will connect with all kids on all days."

I was disappointed to find that the extender session in *Radical Reign* simply included plans to view a full-length movie, with discussion questions. I did not see this as a very creative or meaningful study session. However, the extender session in *You Can't Make Me* suggests that youth reenact a first-century church service, inviting friends and families. What an ideal way to connect with the New Testament as well as interact with parents and peers.



Both studies address important topics for youth to explore. The strength of studying the parables of Jesus (*Radical Reign*) is that they are stories that continue to challenge our Christian walk throughout all our lives. In this study, youth struggle with issues of freedom vs. responsibility, of fairness, of "going against the grain," as they come face to face with Jesus' teaching and find that God's reign is radically different from the world we live in.

The strength of studying the church in Acts (*You Can't Make Me*) is that youth are discovering what the church is and what it can be. This curriculum includes a blend of what is good about the church today and what we can do to improve it. Hall believes that "if teens find the church boring or irrelevant, a likely reason is that they have not experienced it as a place of radical love." Now there's a challenge.

COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY

Why We Live in Community *(by Eberhard Arnold, Plough, 73 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

This little book features an essay by Eberhard Arnold, the founder of the Bruderhof movement in pre-Nazi Germany, and pieces by Thomas Merton, our century's most popular monk.

The Bruderhof is a modern Anabaptist movement that continues to call us Anabaptists back to the radical faithfulness of our ancestors in the faith. To that end, it created intentional, common-treasury communities that offer intense corporate life, fervent faith and worship and stirring social critiques. Here in North America, the Bruderhof has had on-again-off-again relationships with Hutterites.

The interesting twist about this piece is that it also includes two interpretive talks by Thomas Merton. Shortly before he went to Asia and died in a bizarre accident, Merton toured communities on the West Coast. On that journey he also addressed a group of monastics in Alaska. There he reflected specifically on Arnold's *Why We Live in Community* .

It was a great idea to put both pieces in one book, so that two of the 20th century's most profound thinkers—one a radical Anabaptist and the other a broadly ecumenical but devoted Catholic—could interact.

Arnold, true to the Hutterite vision of the faith, believes that living in community is a must for Christians called to it. At times he waxes almost mystical about the spiritual experience of community living. My own life has taken me in a direction different from the intentional community that Arnold advocates, yet the longing for community continues to be there even when I note my own disillusioning experiences with community or see the damage that others have endured there. Even so, by all the reports I've heard, the Bruderhof formed exemplary communities that challenge all who try to give up on the idea. In my own work in local churches as a pastor, I have discerned a yearning for deeper community and fellowship; the Bruderhof has something to teach and offer us.

More importantly, Arnold emphasizes the fact that community is impossible without God. With the Bruderhof—as with all radically demanding groups—it surely must be a temptation to be self-righteous at times. But all the Bruderhof literature that I have read warns against self-righteousness. Arnold also warns against confusing church and community: the church is greater than community, and only a few, he says, are called to community.

Merton's comments are intriguing to read. He talks about the delights of Arnold's vision, especially as it applies in this materialistic world. His comments, now almost 30 years old, were reflecting on Arnold's comments, which were then over 30 years old. The joy and wonder is that they continue to challenge, intrigue and bite even today.

Merton does not agree with Arnold on everything, but he does show an appropriate appreciation. And I, for one, am glad that Merton (one of my favorite authors and most important influences) had such a productive encounter with an extraordinary Anabaptist.

If you're interested in Arnold or the Bruderhof, intrigued by community, fascinated by Thomas Merton or wonder about hopes for renewal of our church in a perplexing age, this book is a must.

Resources

- **Rebuilding Our Communities** by World Vision (MARC, $10.95 U.S.) is designed to help churches provide, support and finance housing for low-income families.
- **Making a Difference in the City** (World Vision, $22.50 postpaid U.S. / $23.95 U.S. postpaid for Canada) is an 18-minute video that examines why the church has been unsuccessful in making a difference in the city. Urban ministers and community organizers give strategies for success based on their experiences in major cities around the world. To order, call MARC at 1-800-777-7752.
- **Godwrestling—Round 2: Ancient Wisdom, Future Paths** by Arthur Waskow (Jewish Lights, 1996, $23.95 U.S. hardcover) is a sequel to Waskow's 1978 book that helped pioneer the Jewish renewal movement, outlining ways to combine our religious and personal lives in today's society. To order call 1-800-962-4544.
- **Invitation to Presence: A Guide to Spiritual Disciplines** by Wendy Miller (Upper Room, 1996, $10.95 U.S. (10 or more $9.31 each; Leader's Guide $1.95 U.S.) combines reflections on Scripture, anecdotes and exercises in a fresh approach to spiritual disciplines.

***********CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 507
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Call me Mennonite

When the Dutch Catholic priest Menno Simons decided in 1536 to join the Anabaptist movement, he likely had no inkling that a worldwide church would carry his name. He probably would have opposed the idea.

Often thought of as the founder of Anabaptism, Menno Simons actually joined the movement when it was already a decade old in Switzerland and half that old in Holland. But he assumed leadership of Dutch Anabaptism at a crisis point in its history, just after Thomas Muntzer and his followers were killed in a violent uprising in Germany. Menno organized the scattered Anabaptist congregations in Holland and urged their members to be a disciplined community and to follow the simple teachings of Christ and the doctrines of the apostles.

> ***Some argue that retaining the name Mennonite is an impediment to outreach, while others say it is a great conversation starter. It may be both.***

Today the name "Mennonite" holds a variety of meanings for people. Few of those outside the Mennonite church—and probably not many within it—know much about Menno Simons, if they have heard of him at all. Thus "Mennonite" has less connection with the Dutch Anabaptist leader than with other connotations.

Before I came to the Mennonite church, my image of Mennonites derived from those who came to my hometown in 1974 the day after a tornado hit its west side. I went out to help clean up, and here were these people who had traveled from many miles away (there is no Mennonite congregation in Emporia, Kan.), working methodically but cheerfully. Mennonites, to my mind, were people who helped others in need.

Later, as I studied theology and church history, I learned about the Anabaptist story and decided I wanted to become part of that story. For a while I thought of myself as an Anabaptist, but I eventually became comfortable with identifying myself more specifically as a Mennonite.

Names, of course, are often arbitrary. Shakespeare was basically right: "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." But in the Bible we find much significance given to names. Abram ("exalted ancestor") becomes Abraham ("ancestor of a multitude"). Jacob ("the one who supplants") becomes Israel ("the one who strives with God").

What then do we do with the name "Mennonite"? It is ambiguous, as Rodney J. Sawatsky writes in The Mennonite Encyclopedia (Vol. 5). He points out that the term "Mennonite" embraces a tension between "separation from the world and a missionary responsibility to the world" and that it "has both ethnic and religious connotations." The term also includes a variety of theological, political and cultural perspectives.

The glory of God: So what does it mean to be Mennonite? Sawatsky concludes that it means "to identify with a particular Christian community with a particular story, remembering what has been in the beginning and over time, and shaping what might yet be to the glory of God."

As John Longhurst points out in the article on page 3, some argue that retaining the name Mennonite is an impediment to outreach, while others say it is a great conversation starter. It may be both.

Recently I attended my high school reunion and had occasion to talk about my being a Mennonite. I have the same experience at other times, particularly when traveling. Someone asks, "Are you a Mennonite?" and I hear the perplexity between their image of Mennonites and their image of me. It provides a chance to talk about what Mennonites believe. I assure them I am a Christian while also pointing out distinctives that not all Christians share, like following Jesus' way of nonviolence or the importance of community or service to others.

Had I a choice, I may not have chosen the name Mennonite. But it is the name of my church, and I'm comfortable owning it. I have decided to identify with this particular Christian community and story. So call me Mennonite, then let me tell you about that community, that story. And let me hear your story. And together may our stories bring glory to God. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 15
AUGUST 13, 1996

Inside

Kansas last spring / p. 7

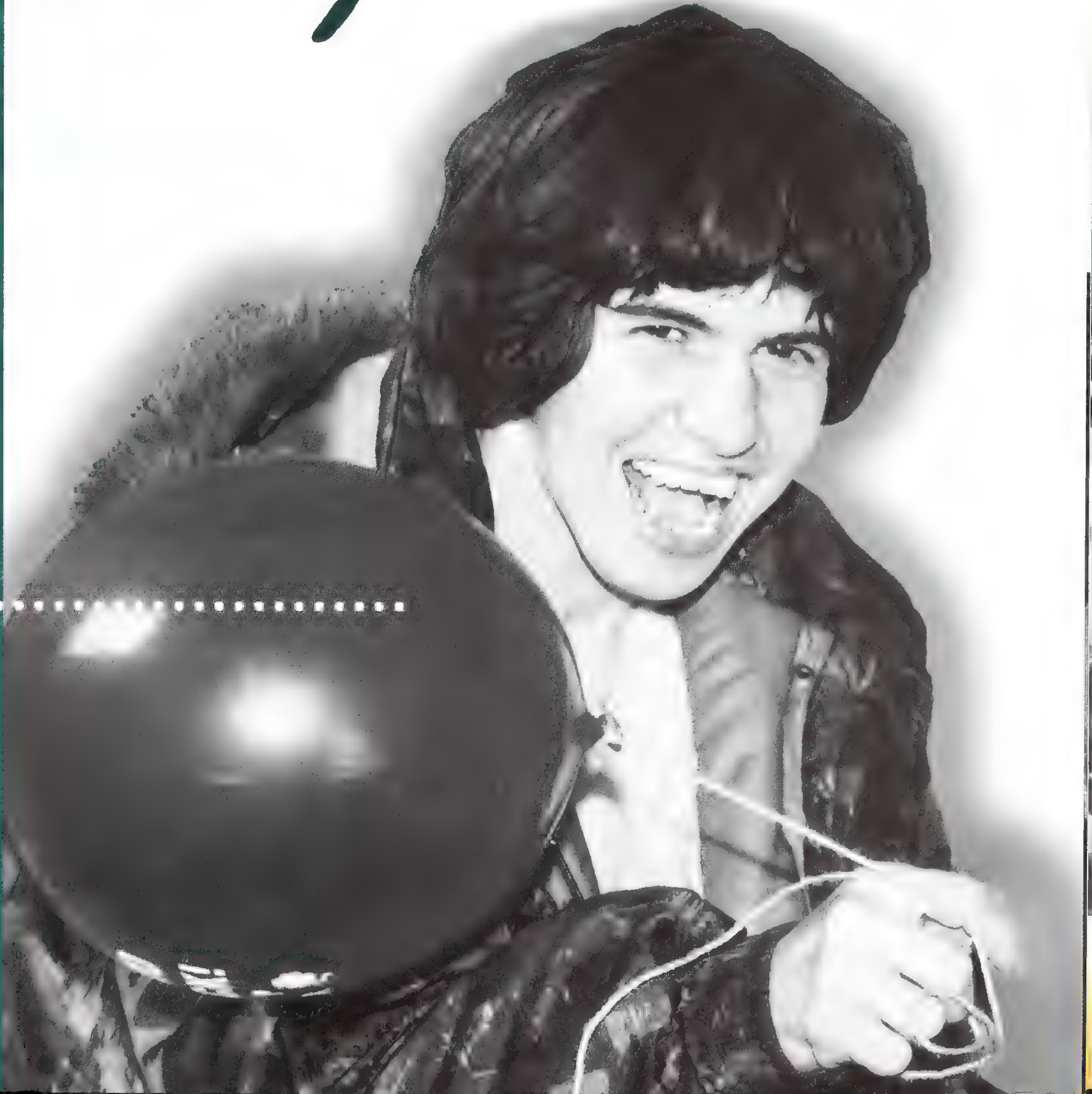
Seminaries and congregations / p. 11

project that embraces generosity / p. 12

ELKHART
LIBRARY
AUG 22 '96

- Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship? (page 3)
- Visions of art (page 5)
- The day the Mennonites visited me (page 6)
- Doyle taught me about love (page 8)

Welcome everyone



Prologue

Ask yourself the question of the article on page 3. You may think, Of course we do. But think again. Are the people in your congregation similar in appearance, in economic status, in racial/ethnic identity? Why or why not?

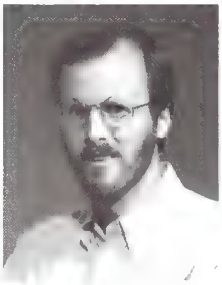
Your Sunday school class or prayer group may want to read the articles in this issue and talk about how your congregation can be more welcoming of people who are different—who are poor or who suffer from a physical or mental disability.

Hugo Neufeld describes one congregation that is welcoming a variety of people to its worship (page 3).

Jeanne Knape relates an experience that opened her eyes to one person's loving attention to another who could not see (page 5).

Eddie Summer still has questions about why he suffers as he does (page 6), but he experienced love through a visit by Mennonites who simply sang and prayed in his presence.

People with disabilities can teach us much, if we let them. Terry Honn tells us what he learned from his brother-in-law (page 8).



Read about Ross Bender (page 11), who has served many years in the Mennonite church as a pastor, professor and dean.

J.B. Miller interviews Mark Vincent (page 12), director of The Giving Project, which he believes will help us become more generous. *gh*

Next issue: Minister where you are

Cover: Photo by Ed Alexander

Contents

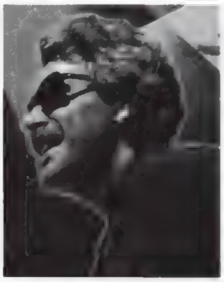
FEATURES

3 Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?

A visit to a Mennonite worship service reveals a congregation that proclaims and practices good news to the poor.

5 Visions of art

The author learns about patience, courage and love one day in an art museum.



6 The day the Mennonites visited me

They came to sing and pray and read Scripture, not to judge a person for his suffering.

8 Doyle taught me about love

Expected to die before age 4, Doyle Dick grew up to have a positive impact on his brother-in-law.

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
11 Profile
12 Fiscal health
13 News
19 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?

A visit to a Mennonite worship reveals a congregation that proclaims and practices good news to the poor.

Hugo Neufeld

The spirit of the Lord has been given me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. … And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips (Luke 4:18a, 22 JB).

To incorporate this passage more fully into my life in a time when governments are reducing the income level of and services to the most vulnerable in our society, I decided to worship at the Welcome Inn Church, a congregation of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada in Hamilton, Ont. Since Doreen, my wife, and I had pastored this congregation seven years ago, I knew that the majority of the members were managing on low incomes. This is what I found:

- People in wheelchairs and others contributed to the welcoming atmosphere by greeting newcomers in the lobby.
- A volunteer driver joyfully brought a van full of people to worship, including a number of mentally challenged individuals who have few family connections.
- A powerful Spirit-filled climate was evident as 60 or more people from a variety of cultural backgrounds participated actively in worshiping together.
- Those whom society, including the church, often writes off in terms of leadership qualities were contributing in worship through a call to worship, Scripture reading, biblical interpretation, prayer and music. One person spoke to me about the amazing level of trust the congregation was giving him. In a few

Inclusive family of God: *Marg Savoie participates in worship.*

Harry Nigh

How comfortable are the marginalized in your Mennonite church, and how actively are they participating in worship, including giving leadership?

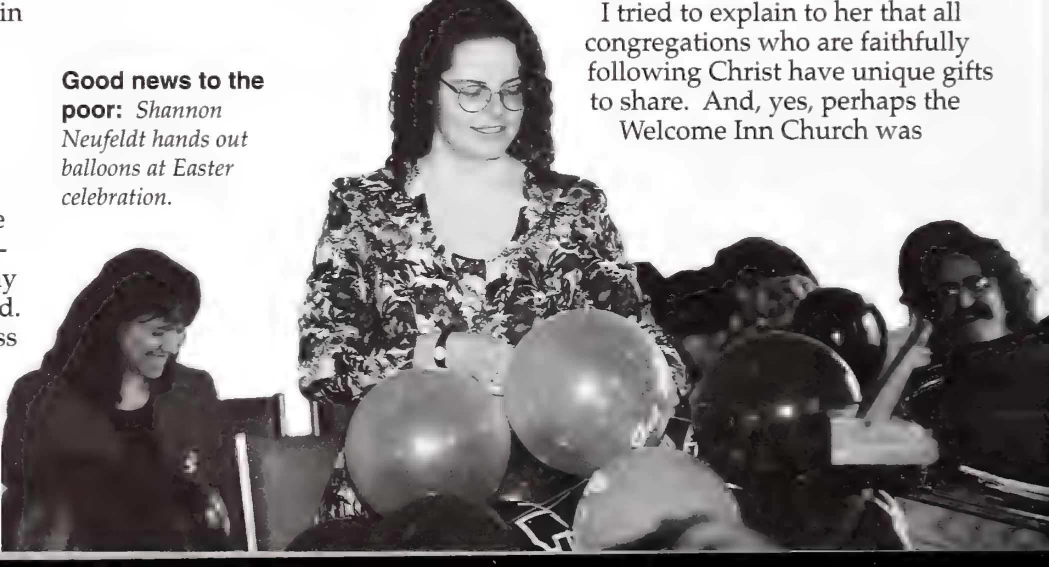
The gift of the resurrected Christ is open to all: *Easter bunnies Waundza Rhodes and Martha Alexander*

weeks he would be preaching his first sermon.

- Although the majority of members were not of traditional Mennonite background, there was exuberant "Mennonite" singing out of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, complemented by other carefully selected songs made visible by an overhead projector. Clearly the service reflected the best of Anabaptist theology.
- During a celebrative song, three young children spontaneously held hands and began dancing in the aisle, which for me symbolized an appropriate freedom of worship for all that was evident throughout the service.
- I observed one person bringing her coffee into the sanctuary, but no one seemed bothered by it.
- The intergenerational makeup reflected the inclusive family of God in such a remarkable way that even the mentally challenged took part in helping the 2- to 4-year-olds learn respectful worship patterns.
- Prayer played a central part in worship, especially during a time of sharing joys and concerns. Each time after two people had shared, the worship leader invited a volunteer to pray for the specific expressions mentioned. I was overwhelmed with the closeness to God that these members felt and how concretely they could share their life experiences. The prayers included a prayer of confession that an opportunity to invite someone new to church had been missed, a prayer of thanksgiving that a cold had vanished overnight, a prayer of faith for the potential new people who would be part of future services, a prayer of petition that God would bring healing for a spouse.
- A prophetic witness for justice was evident. These same Christians who have been confronting the provincial government for reducing their marginal income level by as much as 21.6 percent also in this worship service were concerned about the plight of the people in Central America who are exploited by large corporations. It is not God's will that the gap between the rich and poor become wider, they proclaimed.
- One member invited everyone to join a tree-planting project that would decrease the need for air conditioners and would be more environmentally friendly.
- The sermon appealed to both the neighborhood street-educated and the good number of university-trained members who are part of this congregation. The gift of the resurrected Christ was open to all.

At the end of the service one person said to me, with anticipation, "This church is just what I have been looking for. I'll be going to the Mennonite conference next week. Are all Mennonite churches like this one?"

I tried to explain to her that all congregations who are faithfully following Christ have unique gifts to share. And, yes, perhaps the Welcome Inn Church was



Good news to the poor: *Shannon Neufeldt hands out balloons at Easter celebration.*

Ed Alexander

particularly called to bring "good news to the poor."

However, as I left the church I kept pondering her question and wondering, What really is a healthy Mennonite church? Some would like to suggest that the criterion might be how well the poor are served. From my encounter that day, the right question to ask is, How comfortable are the marginalized in your Mennonite church, and how actively are they participating in worship, including giving leadership?

I then reflected on the experience of Jesus when he was forcibly removed from the temple after suggesting that the marginalized would receive good news. If we followed Christ's example of including the poor, we might find ourselves not only in conflict with the political structures of our day but also with the church patterns that we are accustomed to. To be certain, when we take seriously Christ's call for good news to the poor, there will also be amazing "good news to the more wealthy."

Hugo Neufeld and Doreen, his wife, served as co-pastors of Welcome Inn Church from its beginning in 1978 to 1989. They currently serve as mission ministers with the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada.

Visions of art

I learned something about patience, courage and love that day in the art museum.

Jeanne Knape

One afternoon I toured an art museum while waiting for my husband to finish a business meeting. I was looking forward to a quiet view of the masterpieces.

A young couple looking at the paintings ahead of me chattered nonstop between themselves. I watched them a moment and decided she was doing all the talking. I admired his patience for putting up with her constant parade of words. Distracted by their noise, I moved on.

I encountered them several times as I moved through the various rooms of art. Each time I heard her constant gush of words, I moved away quickly.

I was standing at the counter of the museum gift shop making a purchase when the couple approached the exit. Before they left, the man reached into his pocket and pulled out a white object. He extended it into a long cane and then tapped his way into the coat room to get his wife's jacket.

"He's a brave man," said the clerk at the counter. "Most of us would give up if we were blinded at such a young age. During his recovery, he made a vow his life wouldn't change. So, as before, he and his wife come in whenever there's a new art show."

"But what does he get out of the art?" I asked. "He can't see."

"Can't see? You're wrong. He sees a lot. More than you and I. His wife describes each painting so he can see it in his mind."

I learned something about patience, courage and love that day. I saw the patience of a young wife describing paintings to a person without sight and the courage of a husband who would not allow blindness to alter his life. And I saw the love shared by two people as I watched this couple walk away with their arms intertwined.

Jeanne Knape lives in Davenport, Iowa.

The day the Mennonite

The Mennonites came to sing and pray and read Scripture, not to judge a person for his suffering.

Eddie Summer

My mother answered their telephone call when it came through late that Saturday afternoon. It was a group of Mennonites calling and asking if they could visit me and sing to me the next afternoon, after their church services.

The Mennonites had visited my home several weeks earlier and had sung to me. The Mennonites had said that different groups of them liked to go around to the shut-in people living in the area and sing to them.

I had to be the most shut-in person they could visit. A viral infection had destroyed part of my brain almost 20 years earlier, and I had been without the ability to utter one word in those years. Since I was also without the ability to move a muscle bigger than the muscle in my eyelid, I felt as shut-in as a person can be.

Since my mother has some idea of how lonely my life gets, she told the Mennonites—without asking me what I thought—that they could visit me. It would be the second visit to my home by a Mennonite group, and both visits would live in my mind many days after the Mennonites had gone.

Since the illness had stolen my health almost 20 years earlier, I had been unable to utter a word, take a step or lift food to my face. Many things have had a chance to live in my mind since I lost my health and that is why I appreciate the visits of the different Mennonite groups. Their visits help keep me from thinking about the bitterness that took over my life when I lost my health.

I had never seen the Mennonite group that visited me that particular Sunday afternoon. I later learned that a Mr. Wagler led the group. I also learned that he lived on a farm where my brother and I once worked.

Thoughts of the innocent days I spent on that farm might have made my mind receptive. My eagerness to learn how much that farm had changed since I was a boy made me hang on every word Mr. Wagler said that afternoon.

Perfect harmony: After the other members of the Mennonite group sang two hymns in perfect harmony, Mr. Wagler began his devotional service. His devotions were taken from John 14, but the first words he said amazed me.

Most churches care so much about growing that they forget how to serve God, to act on faith and be honest, but the Mennonites are different.

He stood before me and said that he had a hard time speaking to me because he had no way of understanding what I lived with. Those were the most honest words I have ever heard a member of an organized religion say. Most churches care so much about growing that they forget how to serve God, to act on faith and be honest, but the Mennonites are different, if Mr. Wagler is a typical Mennonite. I only wish other people would learn from Mr. Wagler's example. I'm tired of people thinking they have a secret understanding of what I'm living through because they had read the Bible. Most suffering in the Bible has a purpose. My suffering has no purpose that I can see and no one is holy enough to tell me my suffering has a purpose.

If anyone has a problem on this earth, someone is always ready to say the problem is deserved. Jesus said no one has the right to cast the first stone. Many Christians like to say who deserves a particular illness or a particular punishment. The Mennonites are the only group of people ever to treat me as if I did nothing to deserve my illness as punishment for past sins.

All of us are sinners and pay a price for living in a sin-filled world. The Mennonites that live near me understand that better than anyone I've known.

After Mr. Wagler said his amazing words, he went on to read his text out of the Bible. It was the verse about how Jesus went to heaven to prepare a room in his Father's house of many mansions for each of us.

Better than a mansion: Mr. Wagler went on to explain that he thought Jesus would prepare a place better

isited me

than a mansion for his followers. He said he could imagine no place as beautiful as the place Jesus is preparing.

I was without the ability to let Mr. Wagler know it, but any place that blesses me with good health will seem as heaven to me. If I am ever blessed with good health, I will try to be happy no matter where I am.

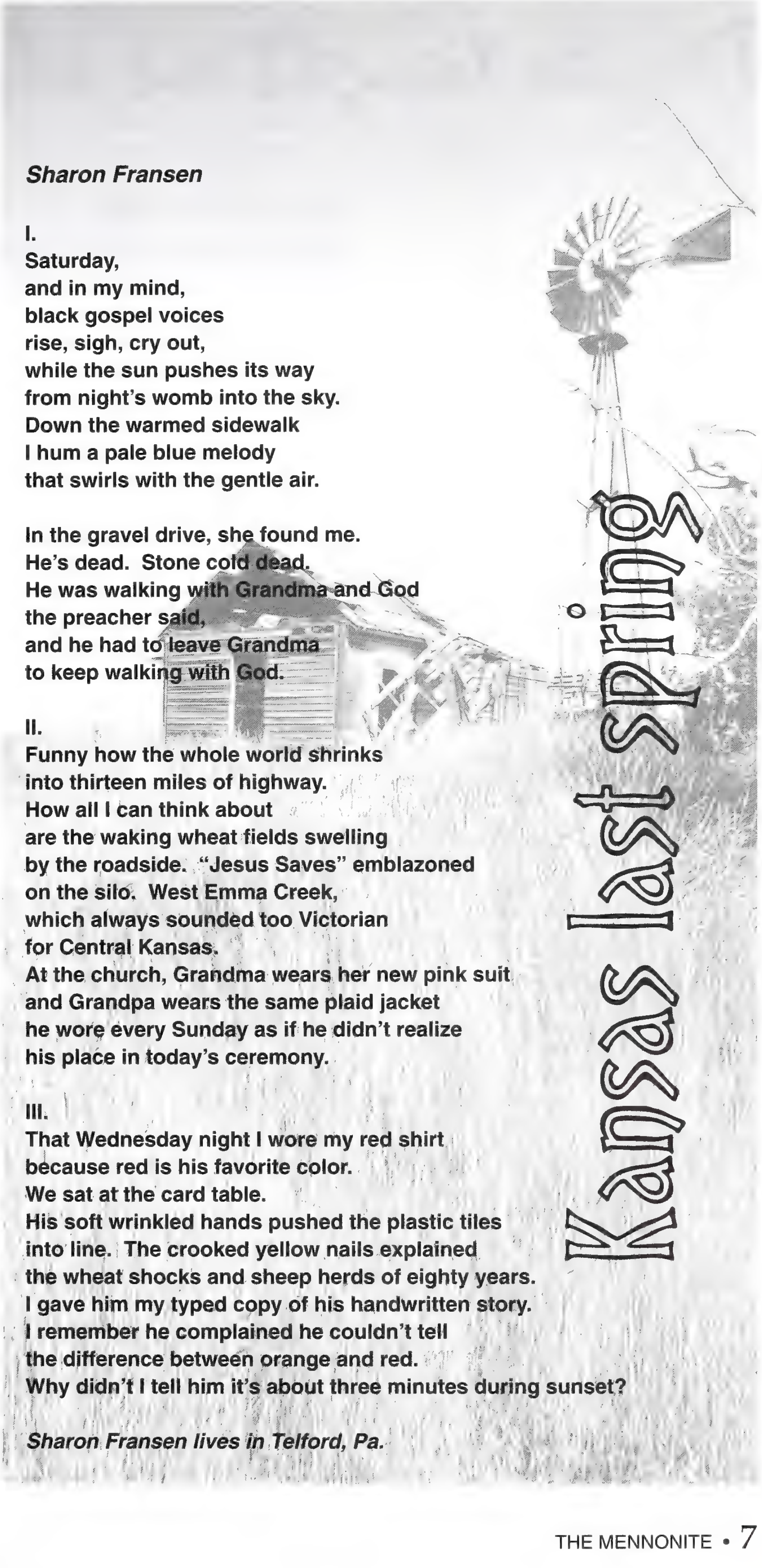
I just want to believe that the house of many mansions that Jesus is preparing will have room for people without good health. Too many people on this earth never have room or time in their lives for people without good health. I am thankful that the Mennonites have room in their lives and hearts for people without good health.

When Mr. Wagler finished saying his words of inspiration, the group said a prayer and sang two more hymns. After my parents talked to the Mennonites and I showed them my computer that I write with by blinking my eyes, they promised to see me again before Christmas and left.

I may never know what good the visit by the Mennonites did my soul. Since I have never understood what happened to my health and why, I may never understand the mysteries of life. I only know it gave my soul comfort to be near the Mennonites.

As much torment as my soul has known in this life, it is hard to believe that my soul will ever be saved, but it is a blessing to know that the Mennonites have faith my soul is worth saving. It's more of a blessing to see the Mennonites put their faith into action and visit me.

Eddie Summer lives in Chappells, S.C.



Kansas last spring

Sharon Fransen

I.
Saturday,
and in my mind,
black gospel voices
rise, sigh, cry out,
while the sun pushes its way
from night's womb into the sky.
Down the warmed sidewalk
I hum a pale blue melody
that swirls with the gentle air.

In the gravel drive, she found me.
He's dead. Stone cold dead.
He was walking with Grandma and God
the preacher said,
and he had to leave Grandma
to keep walking with God.

II.
Funny how the whole world shrinks
into thirteen miles of highway.
How all I can think about
are the waking wheat fields swelling
by the roadside. "Jesus Saves" emblazoned
on the silo. West Emma Creek,
which always sounded too Victorian
for Central Kansas.
At the church, Grandma wears her new pink suit
and Grandpa wears the same plaid jacket
he wore every Sunday as if he didn't realize
his place in today's ceremony.

III.
That Wednesday night I wore my red shirt
because red is his favorite color.
We sat at the card table.
His soft wrinkled hands pushed the plastic tiles
into line. The crooked yellow nails explained
the wheat shocks and sheep herds of eighty years.
I gave him my typed copy of his handwritten story.
I remember he complained he couldn't tell
the difference between orange and red.
Why didn't I tell him it's about three minutes during sunset?

Sharon Fransen lives in Telford, Pa.

Doyle taught me about love

Expected to die before age 4, Doyle Dick grew up to have a positive impact on his brother-in-law.

Terry Honn

Doyle, couldn't you have waited just a little longer? Did you have to go now? I was getting to the point where I truly appreciated you.

My brother-in-law, Doyle Lee Dick, died on April 11, 1995. No long, drawn-out bedridden illness. He just collapsed and died. He was 28 years old. That's awfully young to die, but Doyle lived about 25 years longer than he was expected to at birth. According to the doctors back then, by the time he was 4 years old, he was supposed to be a vegetable: no seeing, hearing, talking, laughing, crying, walking or loving. A mass of flesh with no life. That was their vision of Doyle. Let me tell you about mine.

I married Doyle's sister five and a half years ago. No big deal. We met, fell in love, got married, had a couple of kids, bought a house, got a dog. Before I met Dori's family for the first time, she told me she had three brothers: two older, one younger. "Doyle, my little brother, has Down's." Down syndrome. I thought, That Mongoloid disorder where they're sort of retarded. I wonder what he's like?

We got to Dori's folks' house and before we got in we were met at the door by a short, crew-cut, Mongoloid-featured kid. Doyle.

"Hi, Terry!" Not clearly spoken, but not unintelligible either. The Rs were kind of Ws. "Tewwy." Glasses. Regular clothes. I'm not sure what I expected, but here he was, a not-so-regular kid in regular clothes.

Doyle Dick. That's how he always identified himself. Always added the "Dick." On the answering machine, at the end of the message, it was "This is Doyle Dick, 663-xxxx." He was the only Doyle I knew, but he always added the "Dick."

When I said, "Hi, Doyle. How are you doing?" it was always, "Doin' fine." And he always asked about "my little nieces."

Bible verses: I don't think I'll ever meet anyone again who concerned themselves so much with other people. Can't remember when someone's birthday is? You could ask Doyle. Anniversary? Doyle. And Bible verses. Doyle could sit for hours when he was younger and copy passages from the Bible. Just write them out on paper. Like a monk translating scrolls. Not a regular thing to do. But then, Doyle wasn't so regular.

Being around Doyle made me a little less regular, too. Before I met him, I felt uncomfortable around handicapped people. Mental or physical handicap, it didn't matter. I was uncomfortable around them. What do you say? How do you act?

Doyle made me realize that you say just what you would say to a regular person. Act like you would around a regular person. Be regular. Talk about things regular people talk about. Weather. Money. Girls. Not necessarily in that order. Cars. He always wanted a car. For his birthday. For Christmas.

Once we were driving by a car lot. "I'm getting a new car," he told me.

"Oh yeah? What color?"

"Red."

I don't think I'll ever meet anyone again who concerned themselves so much with other people.

Doyle was active in the Hutchinson (Kan.) recreation commission's programs for handicapped people. He had a bunch of trophies he displayed on his entertainment center at his home. Track trophies from the Special Olympics. Bowling trophies. Ribbons. And souvenirs from the Kansas City Royals and Chiefs. All the Wichita professional sports clubs. He was proud of a new pair of high-top basketball shoes he had just gotten.

That was one of the things about Doyle that reminded you that he wasn't just a regular person. There was enough kid in that 28-year-old body that you couldn't overlook. At Christmastime, when all the little kids would be yelling about being the first to get a present, Doyle's voice would be the loudest.

Yet you could look past the kid and see the adult. The adult who succeeded in getting a high school diploma. The adult who won awards for his ability to live independently. The adult who talked about his girlfriends. The adult who had a job and responsibilities and took them seriously. More seriously than some of the "regular" people I know.

I'm 31 years old now. Past the carefree, me-focused decade of my 20s. I'm finally starting to appreciate those things in life that are important. Dogs, gardens, a place to live. Food to eat. Those people I love and who love me. I wish I either had learned these things a few years ago or Doyle would have stayed on a little while longer. Doyle was one I was learning to appreciate.

Bottom line is, Doyle did all the things those doctors in the beginning said he wouldn't be doing. Doyle saw. Doyle heard. Doyle talked. He laughed, cried and walked. But most of all, Doyle loved. And he was loved.

Terry Honn lives in Hutchinson, Kan.

Letters

EXTEND MERIT PAY CONCEPT

Editor's note: *We inadvertently left off the end of this letter in our July 9 issue. We now print the entire letter.*

J.B. Miller's article "Merit Pay for Church Leaders?" (May 14 issue, page 12) was interesting. Since Mr. Miller suggests that we bring corporate America into the church, may I suggest several more additions besides merit pay for leaders?

Membership in the church is automatically dropped after a set number of absences. Membership is also canceled if members fail to pay certain dues (tithes?). Members of church boards, college boards or mission boards are each required to raise a certain amount of the budget or they forfeit their seats. I was a member of a board of trustees of a church college (not Mennonite) where this was a requirement of the trustees. Members of church boards forfeit their seats also if they fail to bring in a certain number of new members each year. Congregations who fail to pay expected dues to conferences and national church boards will be dropped from the rolls. As the pay of the church/mission/college leader is based on performance, does the church leader get to "fire" nonperforming board members? *Ronald Friesen, Phoenix*

THANKS FOR WORSHIP ARTICLES

Thanks for reporting on the recent Worship Symposium (May 28 and June 11 issues). I was especially glad to have Marlene Kropf's presentation in writing. She has some insightful observations and words for us. *Marcia Rempel, Hesston, Kan.*

DON'T CRITICIZE EVANGELISM

The Speaking Out article in the May 28 issue ("When Evangelism Is a Heresy," page 11) left me with a feeling of disappointment and discouragement. It is purportedly an article about loving all people, but what came through rather strongly is a judgmental attitude toward others, with little love for those with whom the writer disagrees. I couldn't help but think of Jesus' words in Matthew 7 about the log and the speck. When it comes to loving others (neighbors and enemies) as God loves, don't we all fall short?

I was discouraged because it calls us back to a negative mind-set about evangelism that I thought we had finally overcome. Certainly when it comes to the great task of evangelism we must be careful to do it with integrity. (And by the way, Billy Graham has been a good example for us in this area, and that is now being recognized by people from all segments of the Christian church.)

The way of love calls us to practice some tolerance toward others. The apostle Paul could rejoice when Christ was being preached, even when the motives weren't pure. That is not an excuse for any of us, but it does speak to the point of loving others and being thankful for their ministry rather than judgmental. As a Mennonite church we have not been very effective in the area of evangelism. Let's stop trying to compensate for that by criticizing the efforts of others.

The uniqueness of the gospel message is that God loves the world (totally inclusive), and it is our joy and privilege as disciples of Christ to be able to show and proclaim that love to every person. May God help us to do so. *Peter Derksen, Fukuoka, Japan*

MORALS AND LAWS NOT THE SAME

I see a basic flaw in Royce Buller's letter chiding Ron Sider (June 25 issue, page 8). Buller writes, "There is nothing immoral about wealth gaps as long as they are not the result of immoral activities. If a person 'plays' by the rules, there is nothing immoral about the wealth that their God-given abilities have produced for them." Buller equates morals and civic laws. That is a fatal flaw.

Twenty years ago it was a crime in Manitoba to run a lottery. Today the government uses aggressive advertising to promote large-scale lotteries of various kinds. Do morals and ethics change so totally, so quickly?

If I inherit a $1 million legitimate business, hire employees at minimum wage, increase the value of the business while my employees squirm every time they need to repair plumbing in the house because they lack funds to pay, I am "playing by the rules." Am I acting morally? Am I doing the will of God?

Buller also says, "We should never be in a position where force is used to compel someone to do something they do not want to do, good or bad." How many would voluntarily pay 10, 20, 30 or 40 percent income tax without some form of "force" or "law" or "compulsion"? Without income tax, the growing disparity between rich and poor would increase much more rapidly. Is such disparity in harmony with the will of God as reflected throughout Scriptures?

With regard to wealth, it would be well to heed the apostle Paul's counsel, "Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind" (Romans 12:2a). *Jake Letkemann, Winnipeg*

WAR TAX AND PHONE COMPANIES

The breakup of the telephone industry and the proliferation of long-distance phone carriers have provided new opportunities for war-tax resisters.

War-tax resisting usually occurs in two forms: income tax and phone tax. Typically, if a worker is conscientiously apposed to war in all forms, including paying for it, and requests that his or her employer (including church organizations) refrain from operating as the Internal Revenue Service's income tax collector, the employer usually refuses because of IRS penalties. As a result, the employee must figure out a W-4 form schedule that results in owing (and not paying) income tax due with a letter to the IRS explaining why conscientious objection to war requires tax refusal.

A federal excise tax (now at 3 percent) was placed on telephone service to help fund the Vietnam War and has been kept in place ever since. Nonpayment of the phone tax, with a letter to the phone company, continues to be another opportunity for war-tax resisting witness.

At least one long-distance telephone company has decided it no longer wants to operate as a federal tax collector for the Internal Revenue Service. MCI Telecommunications Corporation is required by federal law to bill and collect the federal excise on certain telecommunications services. However, according to a May 31 MCI letter, " … the law does provide a procedure by which MCI may stop billing you for the federal excise tax. If MCI does stop billing you for the excise tax, we are required to report this fact to the Internal Revenue Service, which may institute collection procedures against you." MCI has created a "Tax Protestor Form" for its customers. Included is a request to write a brief statement explaining why you want to stop paying federal excise tax for all future services provided by MCI.

War-tax resisters may want to think carefully about this approach. A monthly war-tax protest letter enclosed with your phone bill must be processed by the phone company. Once a tax protester form is filled out, MCI will file it away and MCI employees will no longer have their consciences raised.

Working Assets Long Distance, another long-distance company, uses another approach. They include a form to fill out with the amount of phone tax refusal and reasons, which can be included with your phone bill. They will then adjust your billing each month.

Now, if church organizations only had as much courage or political muscle as phone companies to avoid being tax collectors. *David E. Ortman, Seattle*

PACIFISM NOT A HERESY

Walfried Goossen's charges of Mennonite intolerance against fellow members who serve in the military (July 9 issue, page 11) are undoubtedly based on isolated incidents.

I know that some Mennonite churches have had their share of serious disharmony, and in some cases feelings have run high. But Goossen's blanket allegations of Mennonites hating each other because of ideological differences are surely overstated.

Goossen should document his claims, especially the one that states, "Many [World War II veterans] could never come home again because their home churches would not permit it." He seems to imply that veterans were denied membership in the church. Maybe some Mennonite churches excommunicated servicemen for such heresy, but I don't know of any.

I have interacted with a considerable number of Mennonite communities, and in none has discord such as Goossen describes existed. During my service in the Army (Korean conflict), the ladies of the Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, my home church, sent daily devotional booklets to all servicemen, regardless of whether they were in alternative service or the military. Never was I made to feel uncomfortable because of my military service.

Goossen's feelings appear to border on bitterness. I can't help but wonder what triggered such emotions. *Duane Schrag, Freeman, S.D.*

Walfried Goossen's article (July 9) appears to be an attack on the writer's own caricature of Mennonite peace theology and practice. The proposal that pacifism can become an idol may at times be true. But, so can evangelism, church growth, the new birth experience, the church, farming, golf, sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll and everything else under God's sun. Anything that replaces God as the sovereign of life can become an idol.

In many places the author saves himself by using the word "often," thus protecting himself from making absolute statements. For example, "Mennonite pacifism is *often* heretical" and "Mennonite pacifism is *often* nothing but a self-serving rationale." These statements sound more like vitriolic personal opinion than a true reflection of Mennonite faith and practice. I would even question the use of the word "often" and substitute "sometimes."

There are statements in the article that are not qualified by the word "often" to which I would object. I would like to know when pacifism became a priority over the "new birth teaching"? What tools of inquiry were used to come to this conclusion? Maybe the word "sometimes" or even "often" could have been used to make the statement come closer to the truth.

Another questionable statement is, "Today's Mennonite pacifism is not a matter of conscience" but "a political tool in our church by which we discriminate against others and discredit Christians who disagree with us." I would not want the writer speaking for me, nor would, I suppose, the great number of Mennonites who believe peace is a gospel truth that we confess and practice in faithfulness to Christ and not as some supposed "political tool" for such unholy purposes as discrimination or as a "self-serving rationale." I hear more subjective experience than truthful analysis coming through these statements.

Finally, when the writer admonishes us Mennonites to stop "hating our Christian brothers and sisters who disagree with us" and start "preaching Christ instead of Mennonite pacifism with a bit of Christ," that is where I hear his "straw man" fall to the ground with one final blow. Of course, no Christians should hate their brothers or sisters in Christ with whom they disagree. But does this describe the conviction of many (Dare I saw "most"?) who hold firm to peacemaking and nonresistance as a distinctive Anabaptist/Mennonite article of faith over against those who do not? Do all or most (more likely "some") Mennonites really "hate" those Christians who believe differently? I greatly doubt it. And when did Mennonites stop preaching Christ and start preaching pacifism with a bit of Christ? Probably the same time that evangelicals started preaching evangelism and a bit of Christ, and charismatics started preaching gifts and the Spirit and a bit of Christ, and Catholics started preaching the sacraments and a bit of Christ. Here's a riddle for all Christians to work on: "Blanket statements provide little warmth for cold, hard facts."

Pacifism may not be "the price for membership in the Mennonite club." But holding fast to the peace of Christ is surely the price for nurturing and maintaining our distinctive faith convictions and a historic community that has born witness to Christ's peace. More "often" than not, it would be better for us Mennonites to avoid selling out the distinctives our Anabaptist/Mennonite faith and practice for the pottage of some generic, evangelical Christianity. *Leo Hartshorn, Houston*

CORRECTION

The newsclip about the McPherson church cornerstone (July 9 issue, page 16) says someone called the Mennonite Library and Archives in Goshen, Ind. Actually they called the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.

Send letters to **The Mennonite**, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Profile

Seminaries and congregations

Ross Bender has served as pastor, professor and dean.

June Mears Driedger

Stating that "I am ready to do this," Ross T. Bender, former Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) dean, former pastor, former professor of Christian education and former director of the Institute of Mennonite Studies, retired on June 30.

"I plan to preach and teach, organize my papers, travel, read and crack my Latin text from high school," says Ross. The plan for his retirement reading includes going back as far as the first piece of printed literature and reading up to today. "Not everything, just a sampling," he says.

Dean emeritus at AMBS, Ross has completed 26 years of working with AMBS over a period of 34 years, having witnessed the joining of the two seminaries—Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary—on one campus and eventually the integration of the two seminaries into one. He began in 1962 as a professor of Christian education at GBS, then became dean of both seminaries in 1964, a position he held until 1979.

One of the significant functions during his tenure as dean was facilitating the "Dean's Seminar" in 1967-69 to explore the theological and academic foundations of the school. "We sought to function as a congregation as much as possible," Ross told AMBS students, faculty and staff at a lunchtime forum in early May. "We called this an 'experiment in Christian community.'"

Ross is known as a gentle, gracious and brilliant man with a delightful sense of humor. According to Erick Sawatzky, a former student in Ross' early days as dean and now director of field education at AMBS, Ross embodies a depth of character. "He has character that is built on faith," Erick says. "He has such maturity and vision … a strength that is rooted in commitment and a depth of character that is rooted in deep humility."

For Willard M. Swartley, current AMBS dean, Ross is a man of great wisdom. "He thinks of things at the right time. He can articulate clearly and persuasively what he wants to say while remaining sensitive to human relations," Willard says.

Precursor: As Ross reflects on his years in ministry he sees the movement of God's Spirit in the coming together of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church and believes AMBS was a precursor to this integration. He remembers the moderators' address, a dialogue sermon he did with Jake Tilitzky from British Columbia at the first joint sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, held in Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983. Jake asked Ross, "When will our churches merge?"

"Well, I had to think fast and said, 'By the year 2000,'" Ross says, now laughing. "I guess I was pretty close."

Ross also sees God's presence in the younger generation of church workers. "There are so many young, gifted people scattered throughout the churches serving Christ," he says. He cites two trips that best show his observation. "In Taiwan and Paraguay I met a host of church leaders from Asian and Latin American cultures who had studied at AMBS," he says.

Depth of character rooted in humility: *Ross Bender*

One moment when Ross experienced God's presence was in 1990, prior to the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) in Winnipeg. This conference was the conclusion of his six years as president of Mennonite World Conference. A month prior to the conference, he received a serious heart diagnosis. At this time he also received a vision.

"It was a vision of an angel who said, 'Come with me,'" he says. "My wife [Ruth] asked if this meant to come to heaven, but no, it meant 'Peace.' I clearly understood that I could now set aside all my administrative responsibilities."

Immediately following those sessions Ross underwent open-heart surgery. But he cites the opening event of that Assembly as a highlight of his career: "All the delegates came across the platform and I got to greet them and be with them for some of the following days."

Another highlight in Ross' life was the six years he pastored at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church in Lakewood, Colo., from 1984-1989. "It was literally a mountaintop experience," he says. He went for three years, with a leave of absence from AMBS, but three years turned into six. "The people at the church and Ruth and I fell in love with each other. They showered love on us when we left," he says.

For Janet Zook, Glennon Heights' church secretary, "Ross was a good example of a shepherding pastor. He was accepting of all kinds of people and respected their point of view."

Ross graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College in 1954, earned his Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Religious Education degrees at Goshen Biblical Seminary in 1956, then went to Yale University, completing another Master of Arts degree and his doctorate in 1962. He wrote *The People of God* (1971) and *Christians in Families* (1982), and co-edited *Baptism, Peace and the State in the Reformed and Mennonite Traditions* (1991). The latter grew out of a theological consultation between MWC and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. In 1972-74, Ross served as the first executive director of the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, during a service leave from the seminaries.

Ross concluded his work at AMBS by organizing a seminar on congregational studies, sponsored by the Institute of Mennonite Studies, with a grant from Schowalter Foundation, Newton, Kan. The seminar, which took three years to plan, worked at ways for seminary faculty and conference leaders to better understand congregations.

"It is a wonderful bookend to my career," Ross says. "It's all been about seminaries and congregations."

Fiscal health

● ● ● ● ▼

A project that embraces generosity

An interview with Mark Vincent, director of The Giving Project

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Within the next several months many of us will hear about a new stewardship initiative called The Giving Project. Recently I had the opportunity to interview the project director, Mark Vincent.

Q. What is The Giving Project?

A. The Giving Project is a five-year emphasis of discerning Christian beliefs about money and developing models for how we teach and practice these beliefs. The project has three priorities: developing resources for congregations, for church schools and for development officers. The project is sponsored by the Division of General Services of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Mutual Aid, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. The Giving Project also works in cooperation with the Institute of Mennonite Studies.

Q. What do you hope to accomplish with this project?

A. We are not raising funds for church institutions. Rather we want to celebrate the history of generosity among Mennonites, strengthen and expand current practices of generosity, and embed these values in congregations so our beliefs and practices of generosity are handed on to those who come after us. We will help this happen through a consulting network in place during the fall of 1997 and through three years of Giving Project conferences, which begin in 1998. Ultimately we hope to touch more than 1,100 congregations and more than 160,000 church members.

Q. Do you have a short mission statement?

A. The short version is, "The Giving Project is a five-year project to develop clear thinking and Christian faithfulness in the use of financial resources. It will develop a teaching methodology to permeate congregational life and ensure the generosity of church members."

Q. Is this an attempt to get people to give more?

A. The Giving Project's name is about as direct as can be. We want to embrace giving. We want Mennonite Christians to be more generous, not just in their contributions but in the fabric of their lives. Second, we make no appeals for special projects. We have no connection to any fund-raising campaign. The Giving Project is about discipleship and about enhancing generosity among Mennonite Christians.

> ***"We want to celebrate the history of generosity among Mennonites, strengthen and expand current practices of generosity, and embed these values in congregations so our beliefs and practices of generosity are handed on to those who come after us."***
>
> ***Mark Vincent***

Q. What denominational groups are participating in this project?

A. The General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church are the major participants. Because some of the sponsoring groups identified earlier have tight connections to additional Anabaptist denominations, there will be some additional participation from these groups.

Q. What are you planning for groups who may not be using English as their primary language of communication?

A. We've translated some of our materials into Spanish, and I hope we can train a couple of congregational consultants who are bilingual. Also, Mennonites in eastern Africa are exploring what is needed to translate our resources into Swahili.

Q. How is the project funded?

A. Each of the sponsoring agencies noted earlier is providing funds.

Q. What are some practical ways I as a church member might participate in the project?

A. Several come to mind right away:

1. You can advocate that your congregation participate in the congregational process that begins in the fall of 1997. By participating, you and your congregation will carefully consider how to preach and teach about money, how to improve the offering as an act of worship, how to be more effective at mercy ministry, how to build a firstfruits lifestyle, how to improve congregational money procedures and how to build strong ties between those who give and those who receive.

2. You can consider the level of generosity in your life. How much are you giving away? How much do you retain? How are God's values expressed in the way you manage wealth? Do others describe you as a generous, hospitable person? As you answer those questions, make the appropriate changes that bring you more in line with the character of God. Ultimately this is what The Giving Project wants each church member to do.

3. You can be in prayer for the church and for this project. The Giving Project has accomplished much in its first year of development. I would trace that success to the many people who have made it a point to pray for this effort.

News

Conference models an inclusive church

North Manchester, Ind.—More than 300 people gathered June 28-30 for a weekend of worship, workshops, storytelling and music, during which they were invited to imagine and celebrate an inclusive church.

"Dancing at the Table" was organized by the Supportive Congregations Network. SCN was started in 1991 as an initiative of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC) to help congregations who want to include gay and lesbian Christians in the life of the church find each other. BMC and the Church of the Brethren Womæn's Caucus co-sponsored the conference.

Friday evening's opening worship spotlighted a wall covered with graffiti to symbolize the barrier many feel because of their individual or congregational welcome of gay, lesbian and bisexual Christians.

During the service, the wall changed into a table of welcome as participants listened to a dramatic reading of the Acts story of Peter and Cornelius and heard from members of Germantown (Pa.) Mennonite Church and La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren.

Saturday morning worship included a dramatization of the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman's encounter with Jesus. As participants heard about "crumbs of rejection," dancers carried plates of hard crumbs through the rows. Following this, the dancers brought out fresh rolls and tossed them out to worshipers.

The remainder of Saturday morning was devoted to "New Models for Dialogue," a time of small-group work led by Sharon Knechel, McPherson, Kan., and Dennis Koehn, Goshen, Ind.

On Saturday afternoon, conference participants could attend one caucus group and two workshops. Workshops ranged from Brethren theologian Dale Brown's "What in Our Anabaptist and Pietist Traditions Leads Us to Be Radically Welcoming?" to "Dances of Welcome" led by Linda Schlabach Miller of Goshen, Ind.

During Saturday evening's gathering, with the theme "Stories of Rejection and Redemption," biblical stories mingled with music and personal stories illustrating the pain of being on the margins of the church.

The evening ended on a lighter note with caramel popcorn and cold watermelon on the lawn.

Tears of rejection: Sunday morning worship, and the conference, concluded with an anointing and blessing. Participants could anoint one another from bowls of water on the table: on the cheeks for tears of rejection, on the lips for speaking truth, and on the hands for unity.

One conference participant said, "This is the first time I have been able to fully participate in worship without feeling like an impostor. I didn't realize how much I have been missing until I was able to feel the effect of being fully celebrative—both of God and of myself."

Many noted that the times of sharing and worship were highlights of the weekend. One per-

Karen Abshier

Dancers at the table: *From left, Linda Stucky, Linda Schlabach Miller, Mary Gilbert, Lois Blosser and Michael Miller prepare to serve Communion.*

Inside the news

CMC celebrates 'life in the Spirit' / p.15

Faith is essential for Colombian Mennonites / p. 17

Programs help keep workers off welfare / p. 18

Canadian Mennonites and Brethren in Christ have given an estimated $50 million Cdn. to help around 10,000 refugees come to Canada since 1979, in addition to almost $100 million given to MCC Canada by these same groups.

• • •

The third annual Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale, held June 14-15 at The Forks, raised $48,000 Cdn., just short of the target goal of $50,000. Most of the money is matched on a three-to-one basis by the Canadian International Development Agency.

• • •

Anyone 18 or older who grew up the child of a missionary, evangelist or preacher is invited to attend an "Adult Preacher's Kid Conference" Oct. 25-26 at First Church of the Nazarene in Nashville, Tenn. For additional information contact Second Row Ministries, Inc., P.O. Box 1393, Smyrna, TN 37167, phone/fax (615) 355-8700.

• • •

Gerald Gerbrandt has been appointed president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. He replaces John H. Neufeld, who retires in June 1997. Gerbrandt, professor of Old Testament, has been on the CMBC faculty since 1969. He served as academic dean for 12 years. Most recently Gerbrandt was interim president at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

son said,"If this is what the people of God can come up with, what will heaven be like?"

There are 48 General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Church of the Brethren congregations that publicly welcome gay, lesbian and bisexual members. An additional 52 congregations are listed as "Exploring Congregations" through SCN.

Several hundred individuals who may or may not be members of supportive congregations have identified themselves as "Friends of SCN." *Helen Wells Quintela*

First Mennonite Church, Burns, Kan., has taken action to withdraw from the Western District Conference and the General Conference Mennonite Church.

● ● ●

Good Enterprises, Ltd. of Intercourse, Pa., which publishes *Festival Quarterly* and Good Books and runs an interpretive center on Amish and Mennonite life called The People's Place, filed for bankruptcy protection July 1, citing more than $7 million in debt.

● ● ●

According to the International Union of Gospel Missions, 79 percent of people served by rescue missions are under 45 years old, 71 percent are local community residents and 40 percent are women, some with children. Fewer than 5 percent are middle-aged, alcoholic white males (a common stereotype of the homeless). (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

● ● ●

Ninety-one percent of Indiana-Michigan Conference (Mennonite Church) delegates approved a statement on homosexuality and membership at their annual meeting July 11-13. The statement endorses "only those sexual unions that are between a man and a woman in a marriage covenant" but calls for continuing dialogue. The statement further declares, "We expect congregations to extend membership only to those who have opened themselves to Christ's transforming spirit ... [and] to continue guiding and nurturing members in ethical behavior as taught by the Mennonite Church, including understandings of sexual practice." Delegates took no action on Southside Fellowship of Elkhart, Ind., which has been at the center of conference debate since accepting into membership a man living in a covenanted same-sex relationship. (*Gospel Herald*)

'Inviting all to God's table'

It could have been any gathering of Mennonites on a hot summer weekend: young and old meeting in a stuffy gymnasium for worship and workshops; favorite hymns sung in four-part harmony; joyful greetings of friends who see each other only at church conferences.

I was not surprised to see pastors and members of supportive congregations. I heard that other pastors were also there but may not have told their congregations where they were going.

Caught off-guard when asked about my own sexual orientation, I sputtered, "Straight." The question came from a gay man. We talked for a long time, and we disagreed on several points, but I felt that each of us was truly listening to the other. Part of my surprise about the weekend was the openness with which people met each other and exchanged their stories.

The jubilant worship services left me exhilarated. We began with a grafitti-filled "Wall of Lament." Dancers then tore the wall down and reassembled it into a table of welcome. The other services were full of joyous singing, laughter, applause, liturgical dance, sharing stories and inviting all to be present at God's Table.

I brought my own sense of injustice as a member of a congregation under fire from an area conference. My outrage grew, however, as I realized that the trauma in my congregation is just one small part of a much bigger picture. I heard many stories of how gays and lesbians are excluded not only from church membership but also from seminary studies and pastoral ministry. I talked to people who feel God has called them into ministry but they must choose between following that call or being true to their relationships. Our congregational struggles seemed small compared with the grief of those who cannot use their gifts in our churches, colleges and seminaries.

My sadness is profound because I see how this continual exclusion is forcing gays and lesbians away from the Mennonite church. I met young men and women who grew up in Mennonite communities and are not welcome in their home congregations. Some have found other places to worship; others have given up on the church. We are excluding our own children.

Despite the pain continually experienced by gays and lesbians and the fatigue felt by the supportive congregations, the spirit of "Dancing at the Table" was one of hope. Meeting together for a weekend was an opportunity for solidarity and affirmation among like-minded individuals. I could sense the freedom felt by my gay brothers and lesbian sisters as they worshiped and shared in an atmosphere of openness and honesty. No one had to hide his or her relationship. For three days it was OK to be Mennonite and homosexual.

I wish every member of my own congregation could have participated in this conference. Although we have granted membership to one homosexual person, many of us are not yet ready to declare ourselves an "open and affirming" congregation. Yet the worship, music, workshops and informal interaction throughout the weekend reminded me that gays and lesbians are already among us and sharing their spiritual gifts in many ways.

What I learned at "Dancing at the Table" is that we are more like than unlike our gay brothers and lesbian sisters. If we truly confess Jesus as Lord, we should include these fellow believers and encourage their ministry among us. *Name withheld by request*

CMC celebrates 'life in the Spirit'

Calgary—Would Jesus, Ezekiel or Menno Simons be on the internet?

The theme for the 94th annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), held July 3-7 at the University of Calgary, was "Online with the Spirit." Delegates and participants heard little about e-mail addresses, however.

The conference theme was based on Ezekiel 36:26-28, which promises believers "a new heart and a new spirit." Speaker Marlene Kropf, minister of worship and spirituality for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Elkhart, Ind., spoke during three morning worship times on personal spirituality, corporate or congregational spirituality and living out spirituality in the world.

An insidious form of violence, she said, is our busyness and "terrible slavery to schedules." When Sunday comes, "we crash instead of being renewed by worship."

Yeehah! *Instead of a worn hockey sweater, hosting committee chair Jake Wiebe presents CMC general secretary Helmut Harder with the bandana Wiebe wore throughout CMC annual sessions in Calgary.*

Melanie Zuercher

A deep-seated idolatry, she added, is "a functional atheism that blasphemes God"—that is, carrying out our lives, work, churches, mission and service without prayer.

Perhaps in recognition of this, CMC planners set aside space for a prayer room. People could meet for a half-hour each morning before the business sessions to pray together. The room was left open throughout the sessions for personal prayer and silence.

Two items that generated much discussion, both during the allotted reporting and workshop times and open microphone periods, were Native ministries and a conference publication.

This year, Henry and Elna Neufeld, Winnipeg, who attended the CMC sessions, are retiring after 40 years of ministry among Native people in Manitoba. At the same time, downsizing by Mennonite Central Committee Canada and a growing call from area conference constituencies to "do mission closer to home" has put continuing resources for Native ministries more in doubt (most Canadian Mennonite partnership with Native people occurs in Manitoba and Ontario).

Spiritual pilgrimage: Barbara Daniels, born and raised on the Peguis reservation in Manitoba and now a lay leader in the Riverton (Man.) Fellowship, talked about her spiritual pilgrimage and her "home" in the Riverton church. "I feel like I belong there, in that group," she said.

Delegates passed a resolution declaring CMC's intention to keep addressing issues of high unemployment and poverty in Native communities.

They also passed a resolution on publications. There are two Canada-wide Mennonite papers, *Mennonite Reporter* (MR), which operates by subscription, and the CMC newsletter, *Nexus,* sent in bundles to every CMC congregation. Plans call for one publication, tentatively named *Canadian Mennonite Reporter*, to be in place by summer 1997. Delegates received a prototype in their registration packets.

Discussion centered on whether the "re-created *MR*" will retain the editorial freedom it now enjoys once it becomes the official conference organ and whether congregations in western Canada will accept the new publication. (The bulk of *MR*'s current readers are in Ontario and Quebec, although it has provincial editors on staff.)

The resolution calls for accepting the proposal of the ad hoc Publications Integration Committee, which had worked on this issue over the past year. That proposal recommends one denominational periodical for Canada, recognizing that area conferences still need to speak to this and that issues such as the publication's name and how it will be financed need more attention.

Despite concerns raised regarding Native ministries, publications, inclusive language (from a report brought

Synapses, a Chicago-based grassroots network that functioned since 1981 to connect people of different faiths who were involved in long-term peace and justice work, has ended operation. Over the years, Synapses has focused on various issues, such as creative alternatives to violent toys, and areas of the world, including the Philippines, Nicaragua, Thailand and Burma. The Burma project continues under the auspices of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

• • •

Lafayette (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship recently moved its Sunday morning worship place to Lafayette Friends Meetinghouse. The move represents not only a change in location but also an opportunity to work more closely with another congregation with similar goals. The two groups cooperate on children's programs, fellowship time and service projects. LMF is on the World Wide Web at http://cindas.ecn.purdue.edu/lmf

• • •

Leaders and staff of the African-American Mennonite Association, Hispanic Mennonite Council, United Native Ministries Council and Women's Missionary and Service Commission, the four Mennonite Church associate groups, met May 16-18 in Milford, Ind., to discuss their role in the integration of the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. Vern Preheim and Darrell Fast of the GCMC met with them to talk about integration concerns. The GCMC has many Asian members, a few Hispanic and Native churches and only two black churches. GC women, Hispanics, Native people and some Asian groups have their own organizations but do not send representatives to the General Board, as is true for the MC associate groups. (*Gospel Herald*)

by Helmut Isaak on behalf of the Council on Faith and Life), the ongoing process of merger between Canadian and U.S. branches of the Mennonite churches, and trust levels between individual congregations and the larger conference, the overall tone of the sessions was one of celebration of the work of the Spirit within CMC.

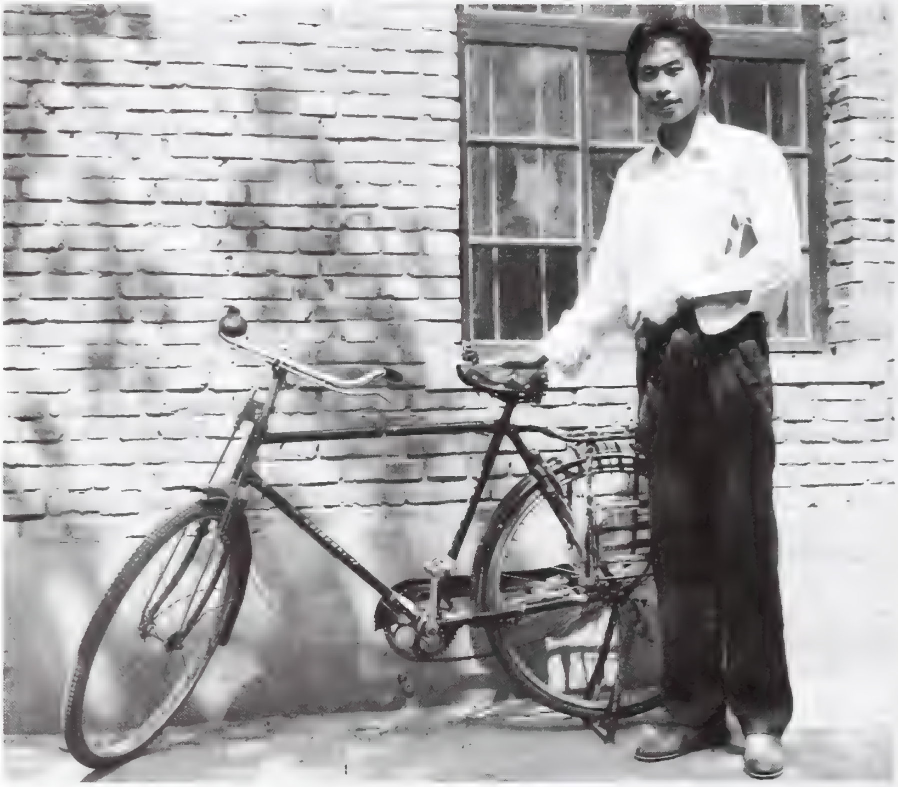
Area conference ministers told about their experiences with a year-long "Time for Listening" project, during which the ministers as well as CMC staff and representatives of the General Conference Mennonite Church and/or Mennonite Church met with their congregations throughout Canada.

Although issues that trouble congregations emerged, the ministers all agreed that an unexpected benefit of the process was the way these visits helped many congregations make sense of how conference work fits together with the congregations' mission and vision.

Seventy-seven youth attended, a record for recent years. The youth led much of the singing during Sunday morning's mass worship service with Calgary area churches. Owen Burkholder, a native of Bluesky, Alta., and currently moderator of the Mennonite Church, brought the morning message.

In other business, delegates passed a $1,977,000 budget and elected Ron Sawatsky, Waterloo, Ont., outgoing moderator of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, as new CMC moderator. *Melanie A. Zuercher*

China churches 'full of the Spirit'



Todd Friesen

In Daming, China, a former Mennonite mission area, there are about 6,000 Christians today, compared with only about 400 believers in 1979, reports Todd Friesen, Beijing, China Educational Exchange program coordinator. Many Daming leaders, like 27-year-old evangelist Li Daqing of Daming, pictured here with his primary means of transportation, are not old enough to remember the Mennonite missionaries, but they are eager to maintain ties with Mennonites. Li is an evangelist at the Donglaodi Church, built last year in a village southeast of Daming, with an average attendance of about 150. The church building is valued at about $5,000 U.S. When construction began, the congregation had less than $1,200. However, members contributed to the costs through labor, food, lumber and transportation. "The churches in Daming are young and struggling, but they are obviously full of God's Spirit," says Friesen. ***Carla Reimer***

The *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad* reports that Menno Simons was honored on the 500th anniversary of his birth by having a new variety of tulip named for him. The tulip was "baptized" at a Friesland (Netherlands) flower show by a government official with the words, "I christen you Menno Simons," accompanied by a sprinkling of water. The tulip is red, which the paper said symbolizes the warmth of Mennonite faith. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Mona Oikawa of Toronto is the 1996 recipient of the Canadian Japanese-Mennonite Scholarship, jointly sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada and the National Association of Japanese-Canadians. It is intended to assist research that will reduce the potential for abuse of minority groups in Canada. Oikawa, a doctoral student in sociology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, will use the $1,000 award to study how two generations of Japanese women—internees and their daughters—view Japanese internment during World War II.

• • •

The Western District Conference (General Conference Mennonite Church) and South Central Conference (Mennonite Church) met July 5-7 at a hotel in the Dallas suburb of Addison, Texas. The groups held separate business sessions but joined for Sunday worship. WDC delegates passed a resolution to pursue integration with South Central and the Rocky Mountain conferences (MC), which defined WDC's position but called for no new action. SC delegates expressed support for regional merger as well, but also laid out concerns centering on differences in polity between the conferences and the implications of these differences for dealing with homosexuality. MCs have a tradition of conference authority and GCs of congregational authority.

Faith is essential for Colombian Mennonites

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—As campus pastor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., Randy Smith has always emphasized the importance of focusing on God.

Randy Smith

Bridge-building: *Jack Suderman was one of the leaders of an international learning visit to Colombia earlier this year.*

However, while on an international learning visit to Colombia May 27 to June 12, he became "more acutely aware" of the reality that "in our culture, there is an attitude that we can deal with our lives on our own … that God is [only one] option," he says.

In Colombia he found that "God is the main actor. God makes a difference in people's lives."

Faith is not a luxury for Colombian Mennonites, says Smith, because of the problems they encounter in their daily lives.

For example, when Edith Acuna first started a church in a poor neighborhood of Santafe de Bogota, some community members insulted her and threw rocks at the church building. Today the church has a successful children's ministry.

It was "invigorating" to see what the 850-member Colombian Mennonite Church accomplishes with its limited financial resources, says Smith.

Tim Reimer, a Ph.D. student in theology and support staff at the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, also is impressed with how the churches respond to "the needs at their doorsteps."

The emphasis on theological education at the congregational level means many members can take seminary classes because they are offered in the evenings at nominal cost.

He thinks North American Mennonites need to continue to develop relationships with Mennonites in other parts of the world. "The more we sustain dialogue, the more responsive and accountable we can be to the church," says Reimer.

"By continuing to build bridges through the mixing of our lives with each other, we become stronger, more faithful Christians," says Smith.

He was particularly moved by the words of a Colombian Mennonite leader who said, "We need one another in order to realize our salvation."

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church sponsored the international learning visit. Jack and Irene Suderman, Winnipeg, who have served with COM in Colombia, led the tour. Seven people representing Mennonite educational institutions participated. *Carla Reimer*

MAKE SURE
YOUR PASTOR RECEIVES
THE
Mennonite
ORDER A SUBSCRIPTION
CALL 1-800-757-5101

Goshen College seeks applicants for **director of student activities**, beginning immediately. Qualifications include a B.A. (master's preferred) in physical education, athletic administration, recreation or similar fields. Responsibilities include administration of facilities and campus services and supervision of student activities. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resume and three references to **Norm Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7539; fax (219) 535-7660;** e-mail **normlk@ goshen.edu**; web site **http://www. goshen.edu**. Applications will be received until the position is filled.

Delegates at the Church of the Brethren annual conference, meeting July 2-7 in Cincinnati, adopted a paper on congregational ethics. The five-member committee that drafted the statement called it "unique within the family of Protestant denominations."

• • •

In order to foster dialogue and promote community responses to violence, the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office of Crime and Justice and the Urban Peacemaking desk are offering grants of up to $1,000 to urban congregations, to be used to help groups plan creative responses to violence in the community. Dead-line for proposal submissions is Aug. 31. Send proposals to Urban Initiatives on Violence, c/o Regina Shands Stoltzfus, 1574 S. Taylor Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118, or call (216) 371-0494.

• • •

The second annual sessions of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference took place at Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore., June 20-23. The main issue was how to handle mission work: one of the two former conferences, Pacific Coast (Mennonite Church), has a separate mission board that works extensively in Mexico, while the General Conference's Pacific District had done its mission work through a conference committee. This year, PNMC agreed on the "committee" model, so it now has an integrated budget and two full-time staff members, conference minister Larry Hauder of Nampa, Idaho, and missions minister John Miller of Tigard, Ore. Delegates also faced sobering financial statistics—at the end of 10 months of the fiscal year, giving to PNMC is 20 percent behind. Paul Lederach, Souderton, Pa., was guest preacher , speaking on 1 Peter. Delegates, noting that their sessions began on the same day that a predominantly African-American church in Portland, Ore., was damaged by arson, passed a resolution condemning acts committed out of hatred and encouraging support of church rebuilding projects. (*Gospel Herald*)

Information about the London Mennonite Centre is now available on the World Wide Web at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/menno

• • •

Organizers of a two-day "cyclathon" sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee in Manitoba's Whiteshell Provincial Park hoped to raise about $8,000 Cdn., enough money to clear one Laotian village of unexploded bombs left over from the war in Vietnam. Instead, they got more than three times that amount. One check for $1,360 came from Winnipeg's Laotian community, almost all of whom came to Canada as refugees, many sponsored by Mennonite churches. The Laotians heard about the fund-raiser when they were invited to par-ticipate in a worship service for the cyclists.

• • •

Indian churches and Mennonite World Conference encourage North Americans to attend India 1997, for which the theme is "Hear What the Spirit is Saying to the Churches." "Assembly Gathered" will take place in Calcutta, Jan. 6-12, 1997. Committees in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America have each been assigned one day, for which they will plan worship, prayer and workshops that reflect the lives of churches in their part of the world. "Assembly Scattered" is scheduled in various locations before and after "Assembly Gathered." Registration forms are available from local congregations or from Mennonite World Conference in Kitchener, Ont., phone (519) 571-0060, or MTS Travel in Ephrata, Pa., phone 1-800-874-9330. One resource to use in preparation for the conference assembly is the video *EKKLESIA Peacemaking: Healing and Hope*, which features an in-depth look at a painful church split and reconciliation in India. The video also includes stories from Northern Ireland and Colombia and comments taped at an MWC gathering in Zimbabwe. For more information on the video, available in both English and Spanish, call 1-800-999-3534.

Christy Risser

'Clap your hands, all you people'

Aisha Sawatsky, 5-year-old daughter of Russell and Etsuko Sawatsky, Commission on Overseas Mission workers in Japan, sings during an Asian-style worship service July 2 at Oakwood Conference Center in Syracuse, Ind. The Sawatskys were among 60 new and returning mission workers from COM and the Mennonite Church's Mennonite Board of Missions who participated in a joint mission seminar June 30-July 6. The gathering also included Bible study, discussion of mission issues and relaxation.

Programs help keep workers off welfare

Abbotsford, B.C. (MCCC)—The British Columbia government hoped 75 people could find work. A Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) British Columbia job creation project has already found jobs for 110—and may reach 130 by the end of summer.

Training Works, operated by a consortium of agencies pulled together by MCC B.C., asks employers to hire former welfare recipients for a year and offers workplace training for the new employee at no cost to the employer.

"This isn't charity," says Bruce Hiebert, who directs Training Works. "The employer isn't getting a free employee. They still have to pay the worker. But we offer training and support so that the new employee can be a successful worker."

To ensure good placements, Training Works screens potential applicants who are on welfare to determine skills, suitability and desire to work. The employer has a choice of several applicants. To date only five placements haven't worked out, Hiebert says.

The cost per placement for a year's employment is around $3,000, compared with about $800 a month needed to support a person on welfare.

A way off welfare: For successful applicants, the program may also be a way off welfare. According to statistics supplied by the B.C. government, welfare recipients who hold a job for 12 months have a 96 percent chance of not returning to welfare support in their lifetime.

Hiebert credits the program's ability to place more people in jobs than expected to the expertise of the partners in the consortium and the hard work of the staff, four of whom are MCC workers.

Meanwhile in Winnipeg a similar program is up and running.

The Opportunities for Employment Program is a partnership between MCC Manitoba, the Winnipeg chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates and the Trainex Centre, a division of Eden Mental Health Services.

Since beginning in May, the program's four staff have placed about 20 former welfare recipients in jobs.

"Our goal is to place 104 people in jobs in our first year and 156 in the second," says Garry Loewen, director of MCC Manitoba's job creation activities.

For Dale Taylor, who coordinates MCC Canada's Canadian programs, the two job creation efforts "demonstrate the fruitfulness of partnership between governments and community organizations such as MCC." *John Longhurst*

Record

CEE—China Educational Exchange
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

DEATHS

Robert Wolf Miller, Akron (Pa.) Church, died June 17 at age 65. He was an MCC administrator 1953-1975, For the last 12 years he was administrator at Frederick (Pa.) Mennonite Community.

MINISTERS

David Epp-Stobbe has ended as pastor at Hamilton (Ont.) Church. He will be lead pastor at Bethel Church, Winnipeg, beginning Aug. 1.

Paul Isaak, Deer Creek (Okla.) Church, celebrated 40 years of pastoral ministry on July 14.

Jeremy Kindy, Wooster, Ohio, is a summer ministry intern at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Doug Luginbill was installed and licensed as associate pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, June 16.

Bonnie and **Chuck Neufeld** were installed as associate pastors at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., July 7.

Elna and **Henry Neufeld** were honored May 5 at Springstein (Man.) Church for 40 years of ministry in Native communities with Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Kerry Saner, Elkhart, Ind., is a summer ministry intern at Peace Church, Dallas, Texas.

James Waltner celebrated his retirement after 38 years of pastoral ministry July 28 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Mary Lehman Yoder was ordained as minister at Assembly Church, Goshen, Ind., March 3.

WORKERS

Mitra Battan, Hyattsville (Md.) Church, is in the MCC Summer Service program, working as legislative assistant in MCC's Washington Office.

Will Braun, Grace Church, Winkler, Man., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Port Hardy, B.C., working with adult education and life research. He had previously served with the Lubicon Band near Peace River, Alta., with MCC Canada's Summer Native Gardening Program.

Ann and **Bruce Campbell-Janz**, Wideman Church, Markham, Ont., are beginning five-year MCC terms in August as Zaire country co-representatives.

Hector Chavez, First Church, Upland, Calif., is in the MCC Summer Service program, teaching computer skills at Fuente de Vida Church in Upland.

Miguel Corral, Comunidad de Fe, Chicago, is in the MCC Summer Service program, repairing homes and churches with Chicago Opportunity for Peace and Action.

David and **Karen Ewert**, Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., are beginning two-year MCC terms with CEE at Luo Yang Institute of Technology in Luoyang, China, teaching English.

David R. and **Fern Gerber**, Whitestone Church, Hesston, Kan., are beginning four- to five-year MCC terms in August in Calcutta, India, as country co-representatives.

Karla Hernandez, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, is in the MCC Summer Service program, with English and Spanish Services and Citizenship Program of La Casa in Goshen, Ind.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and Mennonite Disaster Service are coordinating a "Ribbon of Hope" campaign to express support for the African-American and other congregations whose church buildings have been destroyed by fire in the past year. Any church that has done anything to support the churches that have been burned is invited to send a green ribbon with the name of the congregation directly to the MDS Mt. Zoar Baptist Church rebuilding project at MDS, P.O. Box 341, Boligee, AL 35443. The green ribbons will be presented to the Mt. Zoar congregation and local community leaders at the church dedication ceremony scheduled for later this summer. MDS is also calling for donations to help support the rebuilding project. These should be sent (earmarked "Alabama church rebuilding") to MDS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17500-500, phone (717) 859-3889. Racism awareness materials are available also.

• • •

Six Winnipeg women who have been sexually abused by a minister or other church leader participated in a first-ever support group organized by Voices for Non-Violence, supported by Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba. The group ran for 12 weeks, beginning in March. A 1993 study by the Women and Mental Health Committee of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Manitoba Division, found that 25 percent of respondents who were abused indicated that the perpetrator was a religious or spiritual leader. Meanwhile, an ad hoc General Conference/Mennonite Church committee from the GC Central District and MC Illinois Conference is developing intervention procedures for clergy sexual misconduct. The group plans to set up a toll-free number for reporting charges of sexual abuse, a quick-response investigative team that goes to work following reception of a signed complaint, and a training event for conference officials Sept. 5-7 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Braun

A. Campbell-Janz

B. Campbell-Janz

D. Ewert

K. Ewert

Twenty young adults from five continents will be chosen to work as "Youth Stewards" at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Calcutta. The program provides travel subsidies for people age 18 to 30 representing MWC member churches. They will prepare the Global Village display area. Applications for North Americans are available from the MWC office at 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1. Application deadline is Sept. 30.

• • •

Bluffton (Ohio) College and Central District Conference are sponsoring the Church Leaders Conference Oct. 15-16 at the college. The topic is "Confronting Evil With the Reign of God: A Spirituality of the Church." Keynote speaker is Gene Stoltzfus of Chicago, director of Christian Peacemaker Teams. Other resource people include Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind., and J. Daryl Byler of MCC's Washington Office. Reservations are due Oct. 1. Contact Randy Keeler at (419) 358-3219.

• • •

Evangelical Press reports that after decades of informal worship, devotees of the late Elvis Presley have formed a new religion: The First Presbyterian Church of Elvis the Divine. The church was founded as a joke in 1988, but has now taken off via the World Wide Web. There are weekly services held in cyberspace with about 200 members. "Prophets of Presley" are instructed to face Las Vegas once a day, make a pilgrimage to Graceland, eat six meals a day (plus frequent snacks) and fight the forces of the evil anti-Elvis, Michael Jackson. Their "New Testament" predicts that Elvis will descend from heaven in a pink Cadillac and throw high-fat snacks to the believers. The church recently got a boost from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., where a religion professor teaches a class called "Jesus, Buddha, Confucius and Elvis." (*Christian Leader*)

She attends Assembly Church, Goshen.

Sally Jacober, First Church, San Francisco, is beginning a five-year MCC term in New Orleans as program coordinator.

Jennie Krueger, North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is serving at Doig River First Nation, Rose Prairie, B.C., with MCC Canada's Summer Native Gardening Program.

Deborah and **Robert Martin-Koop**, Eglise Evangelique Mennonite de Joliette, Quebec, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Tramelan, Switzerland, as personnel and logistics coordinators with MCC Europe.

Ma Moua, Hmong Community Church, Fresno, Calif., is in the MCC Summer Service program as a church helper with Hmong Community Church.

Tanya Ortman, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., began a three-year MCC term in August in Davao City, Philippines, as a research and documentation staff person.

Ron Penner has been appointed academic dean at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C., effective next summer.

Dawna Peters, Calvary Church, Aurora, Ore., began a four-month MCC term in May in Ephrata, Pa., as a server at the Nav Jiwan International Tea Room.

Janna Peters, Calvary Church, Aurora, Ore., began a four-month MCC term in May in Ephrata, Pa., as a server at Nav Jiwan International Tea Room.

Lorie Preheim, Washington, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, as a teacher and trainer.

Susan Reesor, Danforth Church, Toronto, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Prey Veng, Cambodia, as a community development promoter focusing on microenterprise development.

Lawrence and **Melody Rupley**, Akron (Pa.) Church, are beginning five-year MCC terms in January 1997 in Nigeria as country co-representatives and MCC West Africa regional coordinators.

Ubaldo Rodriguez, Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, is in the MCC Summer Service program, working as an assistant pastor with Comunidad de Esperanza in Dallas, Texas.

Hendro Saptono, Jemaat Kristen Indonesia Maranatha, Reseda, Calif., is in the MCC Summer Service program as a youth minister there.

Zuriel Sauceda, Amor Viviente, Brooklyn, N.Y., is in the MCC Summer Service program, as a pastoral assistant with Amor Viviente in Stanford, Conn.

Patricia J. Shelly, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., is beginning a 3 1/2-year MCC term in Jerusalem, West Bank, as country representative.

Maryann R. Solinap, Hosana Indonesian Christian Fellowship, is in the MCC Summer Service program, as a librarian and assistant church administrator there.

Kao Fue Vang is in the MCC Summer Service program, as a youth and Sunday school assistant with Hmong Community Church in Fresno, Calif.

Pete Warkentin, Nordheim Church, Winnipegosis, Man., is serving with the North Caribou Lake First Nation at Weagomow, Ont., with MCC Canada's Summer Native Gardening Program.

Andrea Schrock Wenger and **Delbert Wenger**, Akron (Pa.) Church, began four-year MCC terms in July in Whitesburg, Ky., as program coordinators.

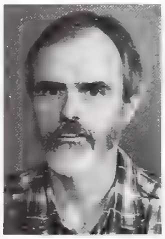
Christine and **Harold Wenger**, Oak Grove Church, West Liberty, Ohio, are beginning five-year MCC terms in Maputo, Mozambique, as country co-representatives.

Alex Williams, Brooklyn, N.Y., is in the MCC Summer Service program as a church-planting supervisor and pastoral assistant with Amor Viviente in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Stanford, Conn.

CALL US AT 1-800-757-5101.

Jacober

D. Martin-Koop


R. Martin-Koop

Ortman

Shelly

Values? Sound money management? Expect both.

M M A

If you thought investing according to socially responsible guidelines and sound money management were mutually exclusive, think again.

MMA has been investing exclusively with social screens for the last 50 years.

This combination of sound money management and investing according to socially responsible guidelines is reflected in our mutual funds, MMA Praxis Mutual Funds.

For mutual funds that combine investments according to your values with sound money management, you need to find out more about MMA Praxis.

Contact an MMA counselor today or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz., invites applications for **associate pastor**. Responsibilities include approximately one-third ministry to junior- and senior-high youth, one-third with nurture and community development, and one-third in general pastoral functions. This position will be open any time after Jan. 1, 1997.

Send resumes to **Pastoral Search Committee, Trinity Mennonite Church, 4334 W. Vista Ave., Glendale, AZ 85301; or call (602) 931-9241.**

First Mennonite Church, Calgary, a medium-sized General Conference Mennonite Church congregation, is looking for a **lead pastor**. Candidate must be committed to Christ and the church as summarized in the Mennonite Confession of Faith. Strong leadership and public-speaking skills would be assets.

Please send inquiries and resumes to: **Ruth Grissith, 10264 Hidden Valley Drive NW, Calgary, AB T3A 5B7; (403) 275-8775; fax (403) 246-1755.**

Cedar Valley Mennonite Church has an opening for a full-time **youth pastor** as of Sept. 1. The vision of our church is to be a center of worship, fellowship, evangelism and teaching; and to develop disciples who will touch the world with the gospel and a practical hand of friendship.

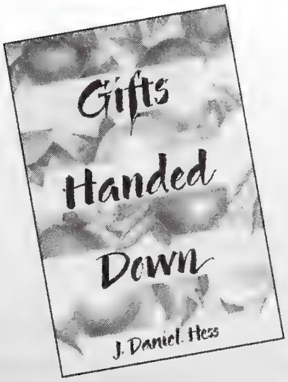
The youth pastor's primary role is to oversee the development and implementation of ministry programming for junior high, senior high and young adult ministry at CVMC. He or she will work closely with the lead pastor and other leaders in the church to realize the goals and vision of CVMC.

Please send applications, resumes or requests for more information to **Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Attn. Youth Pastor Search Committee, 32840 Janzen Ave., Mission, BC V2V 2T5; (604) 826-2445; fax (604) 826-2499.**

The Gifts of Life

Gifts Handed Down

By J. Daniel Hess



A thoughtful journey about inheriting and passing on living gifts through generations. Best read in quiet moments, this book is a provocative witness against the clamor of contemporary culture and the clutter of a competitive lifestyle.

"This book far surpasses the more doctrinaire tone of several recent books of virtues."
—Library Journal

Available through your local bookstore or by calling
1 800 759-4447

616 Walnut Avenue
Scottdale, PA 15683-1999

HERALD PRESS

490 Dutton Drive
Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7

hp%mph@mcimail.com http://www.mph.lm.com/hp.html

BOOKS

BEHIND THE WALLS

The Cloister Walk *by Kathleen Norris (Riverhead Books, 1996, 384 pages)*

Reviewed by June Mears Driedger, Elkhart, Ind.

In her latest book, Kathleen Norris gives us a glimpse behind the secluded walls of monasteries. Her narrative voice is a Protestant outsider's, "someone with a checkered past."

The book is structured similarly to her earlier *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*, with essays and reflections on two nine-month retreats at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minn. She draws back the curtain that surrounds liturgy, nuns and monks, and ancient desert monastics, while interweaving reflections on her life as a writer living in a small town in South Dakota.

Norris is a poet; her love for nuanced language and metaphor provides a fresh perspective on Scripture. For example, she relishes the use of metaphor and symbol in Revelation. She writes, "The Book of Revelation confronts our literalism by assaulting our fear of metaphor head-on, defying our denial of whatever is unpleasant or uncontrollable."

Norris also writes extensively about liturgy and worship and its meaning individually and communally. Her experience of prayers practiced frequently throughout the day has shown her how worship seeps into our soul: "I soon felt the astonishment that often comes to me during worship, whether I'm with the congregation of a little country church, or Benedictines in a magnificent monastery chapel."

Norris highlights the ambivalence many nuns have toward their religious garb. Some value the habit because it opens up opportunities for ministry that do not happen when they are dressed in street clothes.

Others, however, struggle with their desire for simplicity in clothing and in their lives, or resent the symbolism of the habit as a "subjection to the authority of the church that monastic men were never asked to make." The ambivalence of the nuns echoes many Mennonite women regarding plain dress and head-coverings.

The Cloister Walk is a rich book, and Norris is an exquisite writer who leads her readers down paths that are well worth the journey.

VOICING THE SPIRIT

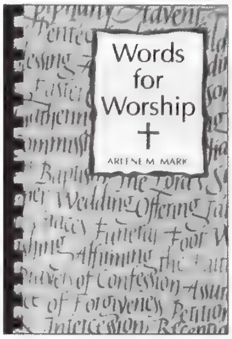
Words for Worship *by Arlene M. Mark (Herald Press, 1996, 318 pages)*

Reviewed by Leslie James, Wichita, Kan.

Arlene Mark has gathered words to help set the tone of worship, to give voice to that which is at work within us as we worship, to help us become focused participants in worship. This collection of readings, some original and some collected from other sources, includes prayers, covenants, responsive readings, confessions, invitations and expressions of praise and thanksgiving.

Most readings are offered with permission granted to copy for a worship service. Those without implicit permission are clearly marked, and all the information needed to secure permission is noted at the end of the reading.

The book begins with a chapter on the order of worship. Mark discusses each element of the service briefly in terms of its purpose, action and flow. For many of the elements there are also bits of practical advice that will be most helpful for worship planners.



The meat of the book is the readings themselves. Mark has done an excellent job organizing the material. There are sections for the seasons of the Christian year, as well as other special times and themes. There is a large section of readings suitable to any time of the year that is arranged by order of worship. There are also sections for ordinances and specific ministries of the church. The book is indexed and cross-referenced by worship use, topic and Scripture reference in a way that is most useful.

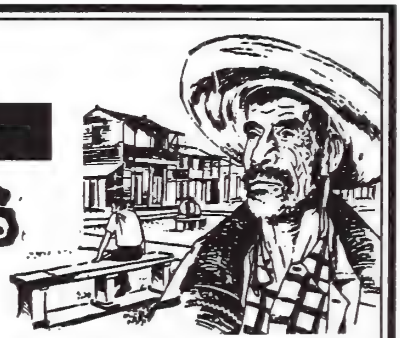
In the introduction Mark states that the purpose of her book is "to promote better worship and provide useful expressions of thought" and "to offer possibilities for many acts of worship." Those aims have certainly been met.

This book would be an excellent reference for pastors, worship leaders and worship committees.

TOURMAGINATION

MEXICO '96

November 14-25, 1996



Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

DISCIPLINED READING

Invitation to Presence: A Guide to Spiritual Disciplines *by Wendy Miller (Upper Room Books, 1995, 143 pages) and* **Invitation to Presence: A Leader's Guide** *by Wendy Miller (Upper Room Books, 1995, 40 pages)*

Reviewed by Ruth Naylor, Bluffton, Ohio

This is a welcome addition to the growing collection of books that deal with the development of a contemporary spirituality. The unusual thing about it is that it has been written in the context of Mennonite community. We have just begun to get devotional literature rooted in Anabaptist Christian experience and linked with classical listening prayer—prayer enhanced by intentional waiting in God's presence for that still small voice that calls, confronts, consoles and leads us.

Wendy Miller is associate campus pastor and part-time instructor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. A spiritual director and retreat leader, she is also founder of the School for Spiritual Formation in the Virginia Mennonite Conference.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, all of which offer the reader new eyes to recognize God's presence, new ears to hear God's voice, and new ability to walk in the Jesus way.

In her opening chapter, "A Matter of the Heart," Miller provides a chart that makes an insightful distinction between *informational* reading and *formational* reading. This delineation between the kind of reading we do most of the time and devotional reading points up the difference between analyzing a text and allowing a text to analyze us. Miller says that with informational reading we cover as much material as possible as quickly as possible because we want to know. With formational reading we are not concerned with "getting this book done." We are willing to wait before the text, allowing the passage to open out to us in its multiple layers of meaning in order that we might become known.

As I started to read with the intent of doing this review, I felt the struggle between wanting to complete the assignment and wanting to truly experience God's presence and hear with my heart as well as my head. I consciously chose to slow down and reflect on many things that were being suggested—even rereading some parts on successive days. Reading in that devotional mode, one chapter is easily fodder enough for one week.

The book is planned for use with small groups as well as for personal inspiration. The leader's guide is an additional resource for any small group that wants to grow spiritually and share their learnings with one another. The guide even has an outline for an intentional retreat time together following the 10-week study, should the group choose to use it.

To fully receive this tempting *Invitation to Presence*, remember to forget your speed-reading skills. Discipline yourself to read devotionally so that your heart can hear and intentionally respond. After all, that's what the book is about.

INFINITE TERRITORY

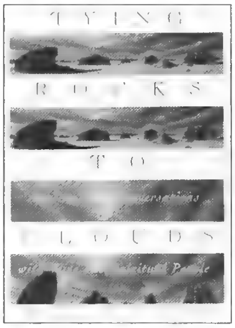
Tying Rocks to Clouds: Conversations with Wise and Spiritual People *by William Elliott (Quest Books, 1995, 267 pages)*

Reviewed by Constance Faye Mudore, Black Earth, Wis.

In order to write *Tying Rocks to Clouds*, William Elliott traveled the world for more than a decade to interview 20 people known as spiritual leaders. In conversations with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa, Norman Vincent Peale, Brother David Steindl-Rast, Ram Dass, Robert Schuller, Harold Kushner, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and others, Elliott searched for answers to the questions of existence.

What is life's purpose? Why is there suffering? What is God? Do all major religions lead to the same place? The author is candid and endearing in sharing the details of his difficult personal search to know God. Moved by his sincerity, his subjects give intriguing answers to his questions. Consider this response to "If you could meet anyone throughout history, whom would you choose?" The Dalai Lama stated that he, out of curiosity, would like to meet Adolph Hitler.

Although the interviews included in the book are fascinating in their own right, *Tying Rocks to Clouds* is no mere compilation. Woven into each chapter are vignettes from the author's quixotic pilgrimage. Elliott not only engages his subjects but becomes a kind of spiritual "everyman" with whom the reader can easily identify.



The author clearly respects the varied spiritual traditions represented by those he interviewed, but neither he nor his subjects gloss over the differences that exist among them. Yet it is also true that a common thread connects many of the interviews. The major religions, while each discovering a completely different country, all explore the same territory—the infinite territory of the kingdom of God.

Tying Rocks to Clouds charts some of that territory. Those who have wrestled with the author's questions or have ever wondered what it would be like to talk to any of the luminaries featured in this book will find much here for their own continuing spiritual explorations.

Resources

- **A Mennonite Journal, 1862-1865: A Father's Account of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley**, edited by John R. Hildebrand, is the journal of Jacob R. Hildebrand, a Mennonite involved with the Confederate cause during the Civil War. Available from Burd Street Press, Division of White Mane Publishing Co., 63 W. Burd St., Shippensburg, PA 17257; $9.95 U.S. plus shipping and handling.
- **Into the Past: Buildings of the Mennonite Commonwealth** by Rudy P. Friesen with Sergey Shmakin includes photos, plans and descriptions of 125 years of Mennonite life in Russia and Ukraine. Available from Raduga Publications, 200-2033 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3J 0K8; fax (204) 885-1504; $26 U.S./$35 Cdn. plus shipping.
- **Adult Bible Study OnLine** adds relevant information closer to your lesson date. Check out the website at **http://www.mph.lm.com/abs.html**.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 508
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

The company you keep

You are known by the company you keep. Paul says it this way: "Do not be mismatched with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14). But he also warns against judging others by their "outward appearance" (5:12). He explains, "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view" (5:16).

There's the rub. We tend to regard one another "from a human point of view." We separate ourselves from those not like us. This may mean those who don't dress like we do (not plain enough, or perhaps too plain). Or it may mean those with a different color of skin or income level. Generally we're with people who are similar to us.

In the Bible, however, we see God mixing people up. Babel, for instance. And though God calls out a people and delivers them from Egypt, they go back to Palestine and are called to be "a light to the nations" (Isaiah 49:6). God wants all the nations, all creation to come together and be saved.

With the coming of Jesus Christ, Paul writes, "there is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17), which we join when we join Christ's company. "Everything has become new!"

One way to discover what that new creation looks like is to look at Jesus and how he lived. One of the marks of Jesus was the company he kept. While he called himself Son of Man (or "the human one"), the religious leaders who were his enemies called him "a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34).

God's family: Tax collectors and sinners were outcasts, not part of the religious society that was called "the people of God." Many of these sinners were called that because they suffered infirmities or diseases, and Jesus spent much of his ministry healing such people. A part of that healing was inviting these people into his company and into the company of God's people. When Jesus announced, "Your sins are forgiven," he meant, "You are no longer outcasts. You are part of God's family."

While sin separates us from one another, forgiveness unites. "The power of sin is centrifugal," writes Frederick Buechner in *Wishful Thinking*. Sin "tends to push everything out toward the periphery." A part of healing, therefore, is uniting people, both within themselves and with one another.

Too often, however, we are like the Pharisees. Even if we don't overtly cast out people who are different, we neglect them. We tend to judge by outward appearances. Partly because we don't want to be judged.

When I was in high school a friend confronted me for ignoring him in the halls because I didn't want to be seen with someone who was not popular. I didn't see myself as one of the popular ones, and I hadn't intended to ignore him, but I realized there was some truth in what he said.

Adolescence, when we are forming our identity, is such a difficult, vulnerable time. It's a time when we are careful about the company we keep, for if we are identified with a certain crowd, another crowd may treat us as outcasts.

That lesson carries into our adulthood. The more comfortable we are with our identity, the freer we are to be with others who may not receive the same respect we do.

An example is the way we tend to treat people with disabilities. Beyond neglecting them by using facilities that make it difficult for them to worship with us, we also hesitate to be with them. Perhaps these people bring out our fear of being disabled ourselves.

Love, not fear: When we let love, not fear, control us, we can be comfortable with people who are marginalized, whether because of physical or mental disabilities or poverty or skin color or whatever.

Being disabled often leaves people feeling alone. And while being accepted and welcomed by others may not relieve them of their disabilities, it does provide a measure of healing. This is part of what makes Jesus' friendship with outcasts so powerful. He welcomed those who had been shunned by others. And because of this he suffered the wrath of the authorities.

As Hugo Neufeld writes in our lead feature (page 3), if we welcome the marginalized, "we may find ourselves not only in conflict with the political structures of our day but also with the church patterns that we are accustomed to." It will take courage to welcome those who are outcast, since we may also be cast out of certain society.

We are known by the company we keep. Let us keep the company Jesus kept, so that we will be known as his followers. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
AUG 30 '96
ELKHART
LIBRARY

Inside

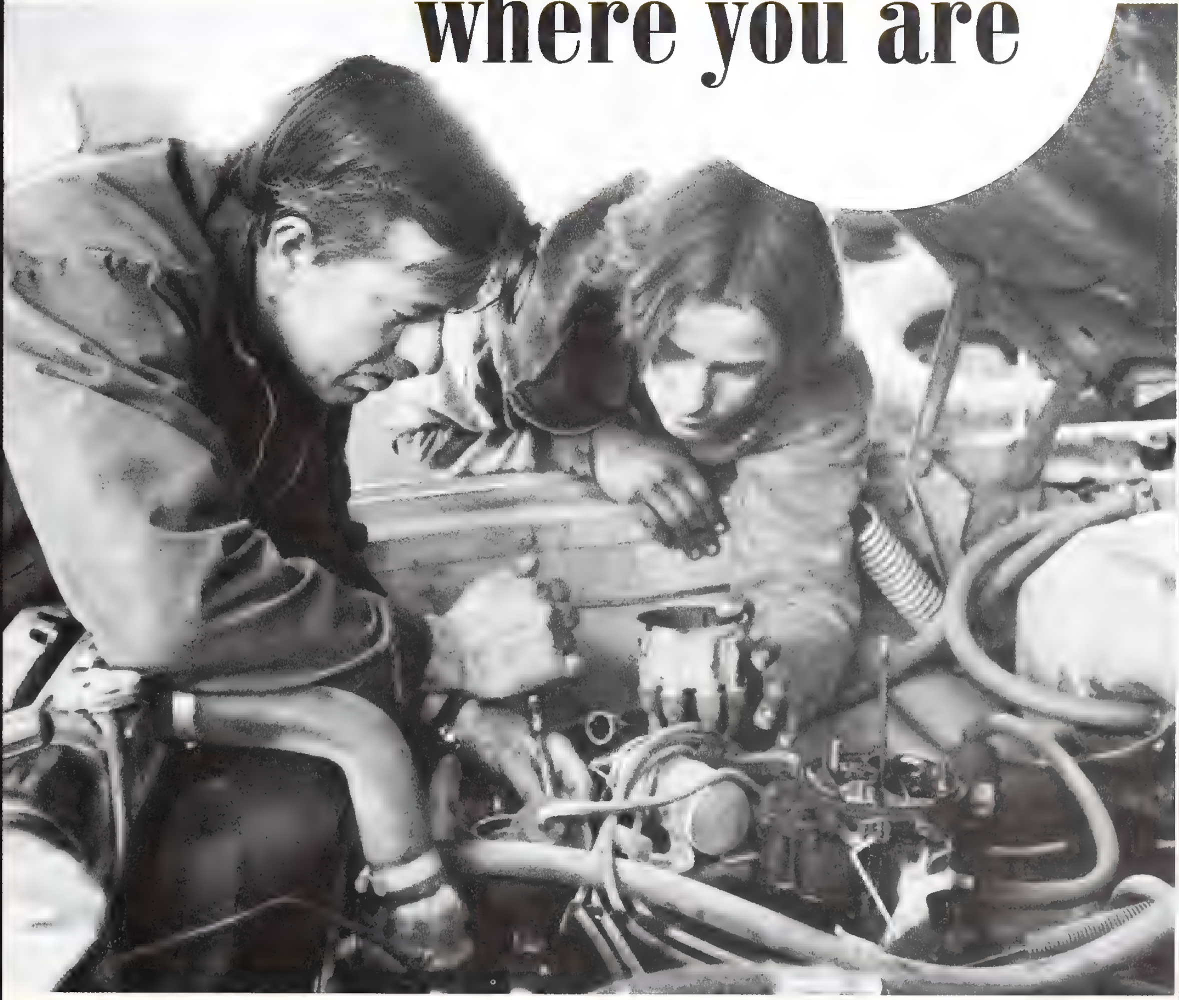
- A life of service / p. 10
- The empty roar / p. 11
- Praying in the evening / p. 12

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 16
AUGUST 27, 1996

Minister where you are



- Christ has no hands but ours (page 3)
- But to minister? (page 5)
- Called by God in whatever you do (page 6)

Prologue

At our congregation's annual retreat in August (see my editorial), Lois Barrett talked about our call as the church to reflect the reign of God. Our lead feature (page 3) makes the same point when it says that Christ has no hands but ours. This can be a scary thought. But it can also move us to serve God, to minister to our hurting world in whatever we do and wherever we are.

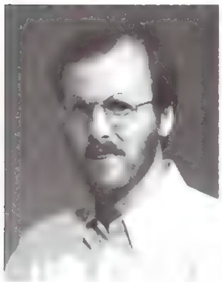
In her poem (page 5), Ruth Naylor reflects on Jesus' statement that he came not to be served but to serve.

Ray Bystrom decries the division Christians often make between religious work and ordinary work (page 6). He calls us to see our work, whatever it may be, as an opportunity to serve God.

Robert Epp (page 10) has found ways to serve others in lands far from his farm in Nebraska. His life of service has taken him to Poland and Nicaragua.

Richard Maffeo offers a lesson from Scripture that was inspired by his 4-year-old son (page 11). We, too, can learn not to fear Satan's roar.

Marlene Kropf's Learning to Pray column (page 12) relates the experience of our seminary in Elkhart, Ind., in holding evening prayer services. Such a practice could enrich our congregational life as well.



We pray you may grow in your service of God wherever you are. *gh*

Next issue: Let the children come

Cover: Photo by David Strickler

Contents

FEATURES

3 Christ has no hands but ours

All of us are called to be God's ministers.

5 But to minister?

A reflection on Mark 10:35-45

6 Called by God in whatever you do

If the people of God are to minister effectively in the workplace, then we will need to understand that God not only calls people to Christian service careers but also to ordinary work and occupations.

DEPARTMENTS

8 Letters
10 Profile
11 Bible
12 Learning to pray
13 News
20 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

All of us are called to be God's ministers.

Christ has no hands but ours

Gary Morsch with Eddy Hall

When I was 10 years old, this business of ministry all seemed so simple. Listening to a sermon about God's call to ministry, I believed God was calling me. That morning I knelt and dedicated my life to ministry, then stood and announced, "God has called me to be a minister."

In the months that followed, I often testified, "God has called me to be a minister." Supportive church members encouraged me, "You'll make a fine preacher, just like your daddy."

Several months later, I felt that God was calling me to work in the field of science. I was confused. Did God call people to be more than one thing?

I went to my dad. "Dad, can a person be a minister and a scientist at the same time?"

My dad thought for a while, then said, "Sure."

"What do they call someone who is both a minister and a scientist?"

"Well, let's see," my dad said. "I guess you would say God has called you to be a research minister."

I had no clue what that was, but it sounded good to me, so for months I testified in church that God had called me to be a research minister. Eventually an older Christian advised me that there really was no such thing as a research minister and pointed out that God surely intended for me to go into "the ministry."

Never again did I stand in church and say that God had called me to be a minister. Though my call was as strong as ever, I had painfully learned that to mention my call publicly was to invite pressure to enter "the ministry"—to be a professional pastor, evangelist or missionary. I didn't believe God was calling me to be any of those things, but I couldn't explain how that could be true if God had called me to be a minister. So I just quit talking about my call.

I had long assumed that once I finished high school I would go on to a Christian college. But when graduation time came, I found that I couldn't do it. How could I go to college when I was confused about what God wanted me to do? How would I know what to study?

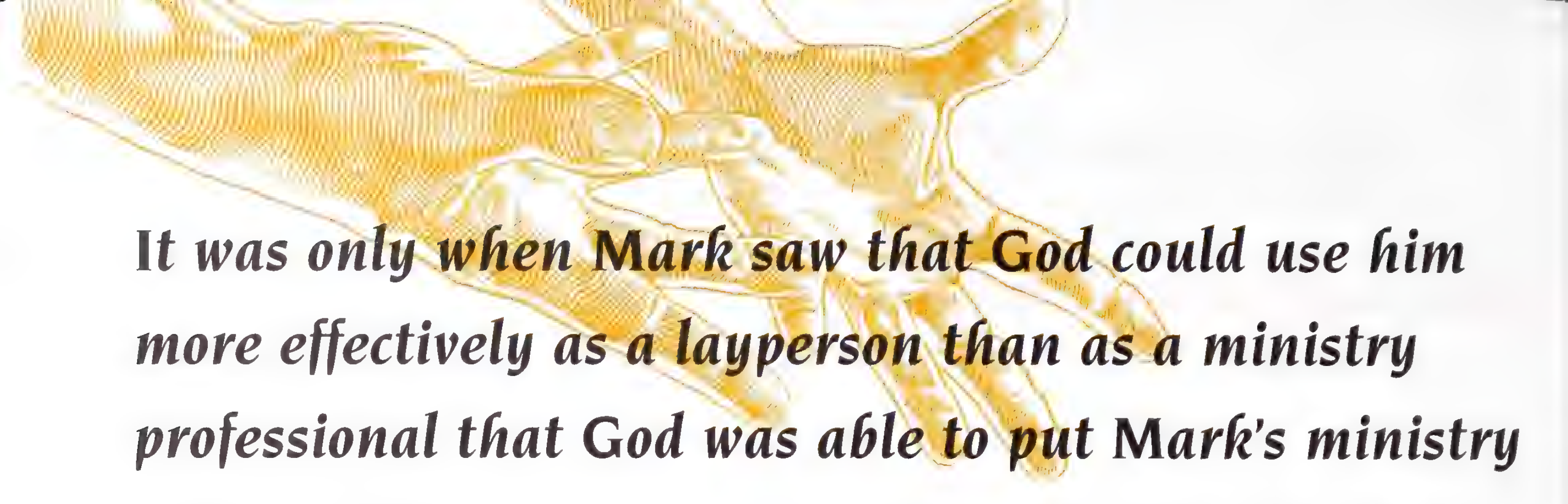
My turmoil led me to do something unusual for a good Christian kid who was supposed to be enrolling in a Christian college. Not yet a pacifist at the time, I joined the Army.

It seemed an unlikely choice. It was 1969, the Vietnam War was going strong, thousands of soldiers were dying, and 17-year-olds had to have their parents' permission to go to war. But God used my time in the military to begin to clear up my confusion.

Layperson: Wherever I was stationed, I got involved in a church, teaching Sunday school or working with the youth group. For a while I even served as a supply pastor. God was beginning to show me that being a layperson didn't keep me from being a minister. I came out of the Army ready to attend college and prepare for ministry—as a layperson.

I was beginning to understand that the confusion I had labored under for years was because I had believed what I call the ministry myth: "Ministry is just for 'ministers.'" And "ministers," of course, meant only ministry professionals.

Once on campus, though, I found the ministry myth alive and well. Well-meaning students and professors often reminded me that a Christian serves God best as a ministry professional. Chapel speakers often challenged us to say yes to God's call to professional ministry. Rarely did any challenge us to say yes to God's call to minister as laypeople.



> ***It was only when Mark saw that God could use him more effectively as a layperson than as a ministry professional that God was able to put Mark's ministry gifts to fullest use.***

Then during my junior year, I sensed God leading me to change my major to premedicine. That surprised me. I had secretly longed to go into medicine but had never seriously considered it because I didn't think that would be ministry. But God made clear to me that day that I was to minister through medicine. My pastor confirmed this when he told me, "As a doctor you will have opportunities to minister to all kinds of people in the community that I will never be able to reach as a pastor." And so I spent the rest of my schooling preparing for ministry as a medical doctor.

The high cost of the myth: My experience is not unique. The ministry myth has been so widely believed for so long that it has no doubt kept millions of Christians from seeing themselves as ministers and recognizing what God was calling them to do. And it has crippled the ministries of countless others by causing them to misinterpret God's call.

Although my friend Mark knew that laypeople could minister, he bought into the version of the ministry myth that says, "God can best use those who are in professional ministry." Wanting to serve God as effectively as possible, he quit his job, spent three years in seminary, then joined a church staff.

In his new position Mark was responsible to supervise the ministries of others. He quickly discovered, though, that administration was not his gift. "I'm most effective in one-on-one ministry," he says. "And rather than coordinating existing ministries, I'd much rather be bringing new people in. I'd thought joining a church staff would give me more time to do that, but in reality it limited the time I could spend doing what I did best."

Mark resigned his church staff job and became an insurance agent. "Though I didn't realize it when I went into insurance," Mark says, "this is a perfect job for someone like me whose passion is to work with people who are hurting. Whenever an elderly client loses a spouse, I get a phone call. When any of my clients divorce, they have to come to me to change their insurance papers. And whenever one of them has a car accident, a fire or a serious illness covered by a policy I carry, the client comes to see me.

"I have lots of opportunities to talk with people in crisis. Most of them don't know Christ, and I can often share the source of my hope with them. Just a few weeks ago I told my wife, 'I've never before felt God using me in ministry like I have lately.'"

* * *

> ***Only as we recognize that each of us is called to minister and as each of us says yes to that call can the church fulfill its mission to be the hands of Christ in a hurting world.***

The ministry myth led Mark into a professional ministry position for which he was not gifted. It was only when Mark saw that God could use him more effectively as a layperson than as a ministry professional that God was able to put Mark's ministry gifts to fullest use.

An unbiblical division: For centuries much of the church has divided itself into two groups—the clergy, or "ministers," and the laity, the ones ministered to. Is this historic division rooted in Scripture?

Not at all. The New Testament teaches that God has given every Christian one or more spiritual gifts for ministry. Paul wrote, "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. … To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:4,7 NIV). Peter wrote, "Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received" (1 Peter 4:10 NRSV). Though in the Old Testament only a select group of God's people served as priests, in the New Testament church all believers are priests (1 Peter 2:5,9).

God does call certain people to lead in the church and their leadership is critical to the church's effectiveness. But Scripture does not single them out as "the ministers." Rather, it emphasizes the ministry of all believers: "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry*" (Ephesians 4:11-12 NRSV, emphasis added). The call of these church leaders, then, is not to do the work of ministry so we don't have to, but to equip *us* to do ministry.

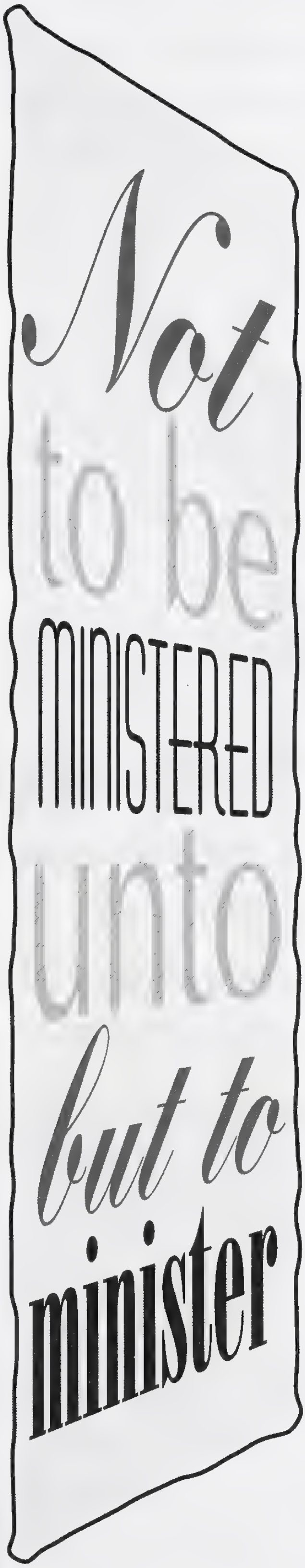
Gordon Cosby, pastor of the Church of the Saviour in Washington, puts it this way: "The primary task of the professional minister [is] training nonprofessional ministers for their ministry" (*Call to Commitment* by Elizabeth O'Connor, Harper and Row, 1963).

Christ's hands in a broken world: Only as we recognize that each of us is called to minister and as each of us says yes to that call can the church fulfill its mission to be the hands of Christ in a hurting world.

During World War II a statue of Christ that stood in the center of a French village was shattered in the fighting. Villagers carefully saved the pieces until the war was over, then rebuilt the statue. Once it had been reassembled, though, the people found that Christ's hands were missing. They weren't sure what to do. Should they leave the incomplete statue standing, or should they take it down? Only after someone placed a small hand-painted sign at the statue's base were the villagers able to agree that the statue remain standing. The sign read, "Christ has no hands but ours."

God has called you and me and every other believer to be ministers. If we don't do it, no one will. Christ has no hands but ours.

Gary Morsch, a physician in Olathe, Kan., is founder and director of the Center for Lay Ministry. Eddy Hall is a full-time free-lance writer and editor from Goessel, Kan. This article is adapted from their book The Lay Ministry Revolution: How You Can Join *(Baker, 1996).*



But to *minister?*

A reflection on Mark 10:35-45

Ruth Naylor

"Not to be
ministered unto
but to minister."

A long wooden motto
lettered in gold
ministered in the parlor
to a young girl
who didn't want to minister
but did want to serve.

Is there a way
to understand
and grow

beyond the wooden sign
lettered in gold
taking its hold
on a life
that would look
back to remember
the message

and re-member
her heart?

Ruth Naylor lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

If the people of God are to minister effectively in the workplace, then we will need to understand that God not only calls people to Christian service careers but also to ordinary work and occupations.

Called by *God* in whatever you do

Ray Bystrom

When William Diehl conducted the research for his book *In Search of Faithfulness,* he surveyed some 200 Christian CEOs. He wanted to discover why some of them were more integrated and effective in the workplace than others. He learned that the decisive factor was a sense of vocation. Those CEOs with a sense of vocation exhibited a higher degree of faithfulness in areas like prayer and meditation, church involvement, financial generosity and concerns for social justice. Yet none of these CEOs had experienced a dramatic Pauline encounter with God whereby they were called into the workplace. So what was the nature of their "call" to the marketplace?

Our English word "vocation" comes from a Latin word that means "to call." A vocation is literally a calling. The Scriptures tell us that we are a called people: called by God and called to be God's servants and ministers in the world. Perhaps the most famous New Testament passage on this call, or vocation, is 1 Peter 2:9: "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

We are a called people, a people of vocation. That is literally what the church, the Christian community, is. The Greek word for church is "ekklesia," from "ek," meaning "out of," and "klesis," meaning "a call." The church is the community of the called. When we turn to Scripture we discover at least three dimensions of our calling.

Called to be the people of God: God first of all calls people to become Christians and to lead a holy life. This general call takes precedence over everything else, including work. Our primary calling is to be Christian, to live a godly life.

Of the many passages in Scripture that refer to the Christian's call, the majority focuses on our calling to salvation and a holy life (Acts 2:38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 1 Timothy 6:12; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 4:1). We are called to become God's people and to become like God in purpose, character and conduct. The call to conversion precedes the call to holy living.

"Every Christian, then, has received God's call," according to John A. Bernbaum and Simon Steer in the book *Why Work? Careers and Employment in Biblical Perspective.* "Without it we would not be saved (Romans 8:30)." But this call is distinct from any call to a particular career or occupation. Indeed, the call to salvation and holiness puts work into its proper perspective. Work is not the most important thing in life. Being a Christian is. God's will for our lives focuses much more on who we are than on what we do.

A second category of calling is the call to "Christian-service careers." While everyone is called to serve Christ full-time regardless of occupation or career, some are called to earn their living through their ministries within the church. Surely the Old Testament prophets and priests were called by God to proclaim a message from God (Isaiah 6:1-10; Amos 7:15). In the New Testament, Jesus called his disciples to be apostles (1 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 4:11). Thus, God does seem to call some people to specific ministries that are either church-related or specifically religious.

However, I concur with Bernbaum and Steer that "Scripture simply does not emphasize the calling of pastors/teachers as much as it does the calling of persons to the offices of priest, prophet and apostle. … We are mistaken if we try to justify present-day 'calls' by equating present ministries with the apostles and prophetic offices (e.g. missionary = apostle; pastor = prophet), because these offices were to serve the church only in its infancy (Ephesians 2:20)."

I think it is better to think of pastors/teachers as called through God's personal and providential guidance in their lives. For example, during the 1980s I thought of myself as called to the pastorate because I had a consciousness within my heart that God wanted me in pastoral ministry. Second, God's people in several congregations confirmed my suspicions. Third, I had a love for God's Word and a desire to devote myself to understanding and explaining it. Fourth, I had a genuine concern for others, especially the growth of God's people. Fifth, I was willing to move in the direction of the biblical qualifications for church leaders as outlined in the pastoral epistles. Finally, I was tested and told that I had the spiritual gifts and aptitude for providing spiritual protection and nurture for other believers.

Growing clarity for life's direction: In other words, my calling was not a spectacular, Pauline-kind of experience but a progressively deepening conviction about the pastorate and a process in which God's direction for my life was gradually clarified until I came to the point where I could say with integrity, "I am persuaded that I am called by God to be a pastor/teacher at this point in my life."

A final category of calling is the call to ordinary occupations of the kind that Diehl's CEOs experienced. Scripture does not speak about being called to daily occupations. Paul, for example, was called to be an apostle, but nowhere do we read that he was called to be a tent maker. Likewise, in the Old Testament, God called prophets, priests and kings, but we don't read about God calling farmers, homemakers and tax collectors. As a result, some have concluded that ordinary occupations have a sort of zero spiritual status and no sense of call is associated to them.

But surely Bernbaum and Steer are correct when they use the word "call" to describe "the process whereby God enlightens us regarding his plan for our careers. … God's guidance into other careers is just as much a 'calling' as is his leading into professional ministry." This understanding of ordinary work and occupations as a calling from God fits well with such broad biblical teachings as the sovereignty of God over all of a person's life, the providence of God that directs a person's life, the lordship of Christ over every aspect of a Christian's life, work as something given to the human race by God at the time of creation and a person's stewardship of what God has given him or her.

Pursuing careers with a difference: Thus, if a Christian engineer, accountant, homemaker or police officer is pursuing his or her occupation with a sense of being in God's will, then they have every right to consider their careers their "calling" from God. They may not be able to substantiate their claim by pointing to chapter and verse in the Bible, but they can have the assurance of being in a specific career because of God's personal and providential leading in their lives. Indeed, such people should be encouraged to view their occupations or careers as a gift of God's providence. While their occupation is part, but not the only part, of their calling before God, it is what God in his sovereign wisdom has given to them. So work is part of a Christian's calling.

In sum, a sense of God's calling in one's life should prompt all God's people—not just clergy and missionaries—to do the very best, whatever their trade, job, occupation or career (Colossians 3:23). As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "If you are called to be a street sweeper, you should sweep streets as Michelangelo painted or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. You should sweep streets so well that the host of heaven and earth will say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.'"

If a Christian engineer, accountant, homemaker or police officer is pursuing his or her occupation with a sense of being in God's will, then they have every right to consider their careers their "calling" from God.

MDS

Ray Bystrom is associate professor of pastoral ministries at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. This article is reprinted from The Marketplace, *November/December 1995.*

Letters

BY BIRTH AND BY CHOICE

The July 9 editorial left me confused. I am a Mennonite by birth and by choice, my own confession of faith in Jesus Christ. I didn't know that to be Mennonite meant to be nonevangelical.

You sent me to the dictionary, which defines "evangelical" as "emphasizing salvation by faith in the atonement of Jesus and rejecting the efficacy of the sacraments and good works alone."

I subscribe to Jesus' teachings of love for enemies and of good works. During the Vietnam War a niece and a nephew, conscientious objectors, served with their families in Saigon, in Vietnam Christian Service. I expressed my convictions by withholding a portion of my income tax, informing the Internal Revenue Service that I had contributed it to Mennonite Central Committee instead.

At the time I was registrar of a college with United Church of Christ affiliation. I discussed my decision with the dean, not knowing if such action might result in publicity naming the college. I received strong affirmation both from the dean and the president.

In a Presbyterian church with which I was affiliated for several years, the elders made an exhaustive study of John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus* and wrote their own confession of a peace position. That church had a yearly budget of over $1 million. Over half of it was for causes outside the church, both evangelistic and service-oriented, local and worldwide.

My husband was affiliated with a Lutheran church before our marriage. In military service in Germany during World War II, he was guarding a trainload of prisoners of war. He was threatened with court-martial because he gave a milk can of water to prisoners in a boxcar.

To categorize churches arbitrarily as either evangelical or pacifist does violence to the life and teachings of the Lord Jesus, and to the witness of Christians in non-Mennonite churches. Jesus taught us to love our enemies. In addition, his parting words were a command to evangelize, to "bear witness even to the farthest corners of the earth."

I want to be an evangelical Christian. Can I continue to be a Mennonite? Can I belong to a church that is both Mennonite and evangelical? *Grace Moyer Frounfelker, Bluffton, Ohio*

AUTHOR RESPONDS TO CRITICS

I regret that my piece "When Evangelism Is a Heresy" (May 28 issue) was taken as a personal attack on Billy Graham. In all fairness, the editor explained to me that he used the photo to fill space. I did not ask for the photo or suggest highlighting the text so chosen.

In the version I sent, I included an aside that read, "I do not know where Billy Graham stands on this issue today. This is not to critique him per se, rather an entire tradition that subscribes to a 'footnote theology' of John 3:16. The footnote reads, after 'For God so loved the world' and 'whosoever believeth,' 'except our [America's] enemies.'"

The purpose of the article was to argue that love of God is biblically unthinkable if not concomitant with love of neighbor/enemies. The doctrine of the Trinity whereby we understand humans created in God's image to be true selves precisely in loving the other (as God is God in a dynamic of love between Father, Son and Spirit), and Jesus' "least of these" teaching whereby we understand that Jesus is found invariably in the "other" were presented as the basis for the argument. Appropriate Scripture was quoted or referenced.

One respondent quoted Ephesians 2:8 to say there is salvation through faith in Jesus alone. Yet I turn to the famous judgment passage in Matthew 25:31ff. spoken by Jesus, and see absolutely no mention of "faith in Jesus" as the basis for the separation of sheep and goats. On the contrary, loving one's enemies ("the least") is not just a part of the doctrine of salvation here, it is the doctrine of salvation according to Jesus ("eternal life" in verse 46). In Matthew 7, I discover that calling Jesus "Lord" (v. 21) is meaningless unless one puts into practice (v. 24) what Jesus says. The immediate context for "what Jesus says" is the acts of mercy in the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5-7, including loving enemies. The "narrow gate," the "good tree," the "wise man" are all pointers to those saved being doers of good works according to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount teaching. There is then James 2:18: "Show me your faith without deeds [faith alone], and I will show you my faith by what I do." This answers in the negative the question: "Can such faith [alone] save him?" (v. 14). The immediate context and that of James for "deeds" are acts of mercy, of which love of enemies is the supreme test. This is of course precisely Paul's point in Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." The rest of that chapter is about love and reconciliation of enemies through Christ's atonement (cf. Romans 5: 6-11 [God's modeling of love of enemies]), the call to imitation of which Ephesians 5:1-2 makes explicit ("live a life of love" [implicitly—of enemies].)

There is the same kind of tension here between faith and works as between free will and election, Christ's deity and humanity and the already/not yet nature of the kingdom. Both must be equally emphasized.

Preaching love of Jesus without love of enemies is not the gospel but a heresy. To love Jesus means to love enemies.

I take to heart the call for "dialogue, not diatribe." I did not intend diatribe. I am willing to continue dialogue. People may write me at 21780 18th Ave., Langley BC, V2Z 1P8; or wnorthey@peacesummit.com. *Wayne Northey*

DON'T DIVIDE OVER LABELS

The 16th-century Radical Reformers (aka "Anabaptists") refused to call themselves "Anabaptist" or "Mennonite." They simply referred to one another as brother or sister. If we are trying to be strict and pure followers of the 16th-century Radical Reformers, why are we clinging to names they rejected?

In any case, let us be tolerant on this matter, recognizing that God may be calling churches to use different labels in varying situations. We must try to cooperate and fellowship with all churches that are seeking to connect to the overall vision of the Radical Reformers. Let's not divide Christ's body because of labels; rather let us unite the body in Christ's love and service. *Dave Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

WORSHIP MOST IMPORTANT

I just finished reading the June 11 issue of *The Mennonite*, in which worship was featured. What a great issue! I particularly appreciated the articles by Marlene Kropf (page 3), Leslie James (page 8) and Don Steelberg (page 10). Worship and music have been an integral part of my life. I am more and more convinced that worship is the most important "event" in the life of any congregation.

I also appreciated the article by J.B. Miller (page 12), even though I found it sobering. At middle age I am certainly thinking about what will happen at retirement, while at the same time wondering how my two boys will be able to afford college. *Karen Moshier-Shenk, Harrisonburg, Va.*

WORSHIP IS POLITICS

Where evangelicals (and the catholic creeds and sacraments) think of the cross as the sacrifice that a violent God demanded, many of us have learned that it was humankind that sacrificed Jesus, much as Jesus predicted in John 6: "You will munch on my flesh."

Mennonites should not be evangelicals if that means defining deity in terms of a violent second coming and eternal torture or annihilation (or the "separation" euphemism). We are a pacifist people, because we worship a pacifist God who spared not his Son but did not kill his Son.

As somebody who feels surrounded and captivated by capitalistic habits, I have begun worshiping with Mennonites because I need a church where I can begin to be "culturally Christian." I know that being Mennonite is not the only way to practice Christian politics. But I need a church that cares much about being a Jesus church, and that means living together like Jesus.

I do not call this concern for the church "social action" for "peace and justice." That would imply that the only alternative to getting people saved is influencing Washington. My hope rather is that our gatherings for worship are the "action" (and the best kind of politics).

The Lord's Supper, for example, is all about politics. Menno Simons at first denied what Catholics and Protestants taught about "sacraments." Mennonites may be ashamed of what Menno thought, but it is our ecumenical responsibility to teach the larger church that Communion is our political response, not God's action. *Mark McCulley, Ephrata, Pa.*

FAITHFUL TO THE LIGHT WE HAVE

Articles in the July 23 issue ("Call Us Mennonite") raise a number of issues. Perhaps we would have done better to call ourselves Anabaptists, which more aptly describes our beliefs. I'm not sure that Menno Simons ever saw himself as the founder of a church denomination; he was simply living out the beliefs he had come to understand and cherish. We should too.

On the other hand, dropping the name Mennonite because someone does not know what it means and it could stand in the way of them becoming part of a church begs the question of identity. It should not be surprising to anyone that the very things some of our leaders feel keep people away from their congregations are those that attract others to the Mennonite church. This simply proves that there are no absolutes when it comes to dealing with the unpredictability of human nature.

We all come from somewhere and even nondenominational churches have a "culture." Anything done for a number of times becomes part of our way of behaving and thus is part of our culture. Unfortunately, with Mennonites these items have usually been seen to be inconsequential matters such as the foods we like.

We have distinctives as being peacemakers and practicing mutual aid and helping those in need. We do these things because Christ taught them; they are not an optional part of the gospel. Christ saves us also to share the good news in many ways.

Christianity is not a numbers game. It is about being faithful to the light we have. I encourage us to carry on the dialogue on this topic. Your articles are an important part of the dialogue. *Lorne Buhr, Edmonton, Alta.*

KEEP THE MENNONITE IDENTITY

I found the July 23 issue astounding, partly because I had just preached a lectionary sermon on "the bartering of our birthright," based on the Jacob and Esau story, in which I noted with regret that many congregations are dropping the "Mennonite" label at the time when it needs to be kept.

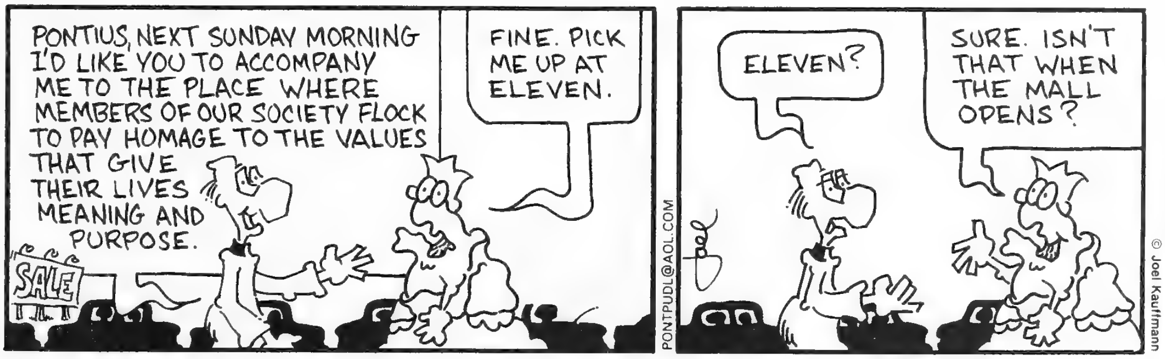
Over and over it is people who have joined us from other faiths or from no faith that are the most adamant in keeping the Mennonite label.

Labels define us. I have resisted the efforts of growth-minded people to become "market smart" in evangelism efforts. If we are serious about marketing the church, we will keep the label that has defined us for nearly 500 years and run on that track record.

That may mean some things we would rather not face, such as willingness to live at the margins of society rather than in the mainstream. Adopting mainstream labels betrays unwillingness to be the marginal, dissenting minority we have always been.

One Mennonite pastor, a former Presbyterian pastor with evangelical convictions, is considering a proposal to readopt "Mennonite" as a part of his congregation's identity after years of a "Community Bible Church" type label. He believes this is the best way to evangelize. Praise the Lord for new life from this new leader. *Melvin D. Schmidt, Hyattsville, Md.*

Pontius' Puddle


PONTIUS, NEXT SUNDAY MORNING I'D LIKE YOU TO ACCOMPANY ME TO THE PLACE WHERE MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY FLOCK TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE VALUES THAT GIVE THEIR LIVES MEANING AND PURPOSE.
FINE. PICK ME UP AT ELEVEN.
SALE
PONTPUDL@AOL.COM
ELEVEN?
SURE. ISN'T THAT WHEN THE MALL OPENS?
© Joel Kauffman

Profile

A life of service

People of Central America inspire Nebraska farmer Robert Epp.

Lynette Klassen Block

Robert Epp's service with Mennonite Central Committee started soon after World War II. A call for MCC workers prompted Robert to share his agricultural skills with farmers in war-torn Poland. The MCC volunteers traveled by ship and were responsible for loading, feeding, unloading and delivering 747 horses whose living quarters filled five decks of the ship.

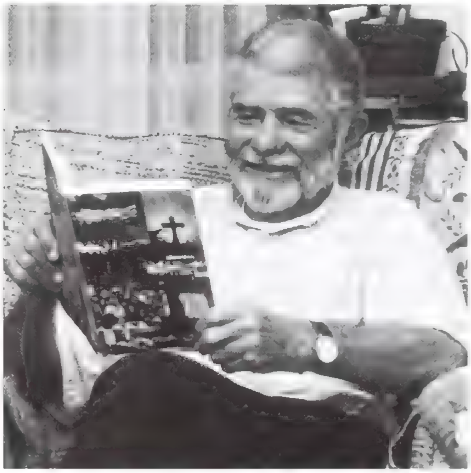
On a cold December day the ship docked on the banks of Danzig (Gdansk), Poland. Collapsed buildings and frozen bodies still buried in heaps of rubble were Robert's first impressions of a country devastated by war. People in the fragmented community began putting pieces of their lives together, with the help of the horses to clear fields, rebuild homes and barns and plant crops.

Even though the time in Poland was short, the 30 MCC volunteers were stunned by the stories of injustice experienced by front-line soldiers being sent to a gruesome death because "their people" did not match the race or color of privileged troops kept further back. This experience broadened Robert's vision of kingdom work toward justice.

Robert's concern for people began as he observed his parents' actions and commitment. H.D. Epp and Elizabeth Richert married and established a home near Henderson, Neb. Robert's father became an ordained minister and participated in a group called Fellowship of Reconciliation. It was not uncommon for Robert and his brothers to listen to faith stories of theologians visiting their home.

Upon his return to the United States, Robert completed his degree in agriculture. He continued farming and later met and married Amelia Becker. Their union became a partnership for a life of service and of sharing Christ's peace message at home and abroad. Robert and Amelia began working with Nebraskans for Peace, a group established to advocate for health, agriculture and poverty issues.

Sorrow, poverty and fear of death: In 1985 Robert traveled to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace for a one-year term. His duties included recording and documenting observations of Contra military activity in Nicaraguan villages. Robert was able to build relationships and learn from people who had lived through suffering, sorrow, poverty and fear of death.


Steven Block

One of his assignments was driving an ambulance from the small village to a town 15 miles away. When the vehicle was not used for transporting the sick, it became a taxi. Although his language skills were limited, Robert was able to talk with his passengers. He was blessed by the villagers' attitude of hope in the midst of adversity. And he was inspired by their spontaneous celebrations of small things, like the electricity coming on after blackout—an event that occasioned a community dance in the streets. Amelia and son Charles were able to join Robert on assignment for part of his stay and share in this service opportunity.

Before leaving Central America, Robert contacted Elaine and Nathan Zook-Barge, the MCC country directors in Guatemala. As they shared the stories and needs of their efforts at CEDESCRI, a Christian education center, Elaine asked whether Robert could coordinate a group to help with the construction of a training center there. Robert was not sure he would be able to gather volunteers from North America willing to leave jobs and families for two or three weeks. He was unsure of his ability to communicate his own experiences and his sense of inspiration from the people of Central America well enough to convince church members to travel to Guatemala.

Cautiously Robert began planting the idea with several men from his church of a working vacation for January 1994. Eventually Robert and Amelia began orientation with 14 volunteers from Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson. The Guatemalan connection was a positive partnership with long-term MCC workers who had already built trusting relationships with local people. During their time there, volunteers were deeply touched by the love and joy shared with new friends.

> ***"I feel more alive when learning from other cultures. There is a richness within diversity"***
>
> ***Robert Epp***

Robert, his brother Carl and the volunteers shared their stories of relationships established with brothers and sisters in Guatemala with their church. In 1996 a second crew traveled to Guatemala to build an addition to the existing CEDESCRI building.

"I feel more alive when learning from other cultures. There is a richness within diversity," says Robert. His Christian faith is woven with a vision for peace and justice. There is an eternal hope in his work of connecting and binding multiple cultures with an emphasis on the human and spiritual needs of all people.

Lynette Klassen Block is a member of the MCC U.S. board. She works as an education consultant in Milford, Neb.

Bible

The empty roar

The truth of God's Word will keep us safe from Satan's ferocious roar.

Richard Maffeo

I tossed and turned trying to ignore Eric's wall-rattling snores from the guest room down the hall. But it was no use. There would be no further sleep for me until he rolled over.

May as well check on David, I thought to myself as I threw off the covers and slipped out of bed. Our 4-year-old could sleep through a tornado, so I was not expecting to see him lying awake in his bed. His eyes were wide with terror.

"What's wrong?" I asked, sitting down beside him. He didn't answer, but hearing the growls down the hall, I surmised the problem. "Are you frightened?"

He nodded and pointed toward the other room. "Lion," he whispered and snuggled close to me.

"You think there is a lion in the house?" I tried not to smile.

When he nodded again I lifted him into my arms and tiptoed to the other room. There I opened the door and showed him the "lion." David stared at him for a few moments. Then he smiled.

In reflecting on that experience I see an uncomfortably close spiritual parallel between David's fears and those of my own. For example, at times Satan's roar can seem very much like a lion's, frightfully menacing (1 Peter 5:8). And it can paralyze me with fear—fear of the unknown, fear of the future, fear of the past, fear of the present. "What if?" replaces "I am my beloved and he is mine." And I long for the daylight when my personal darkness will flee.

It has been said, "God's peace is always greater than our fears." I think the apostle Paul understood this. Listen to what he says:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? … Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39 KJV).

Standing at the threshold of the "lion's" den and faced with truth (that there was no lion), peace washed over my son's heart.

Oh to be as a child in the arms of our heavenly Father; to stand with him at the threshold of hell itself and know—to really know—the glorious truth that Satan's rage has been forever deflected by Calvary. Do you ever find yourself hungering for that to be a reality in your heart as well?

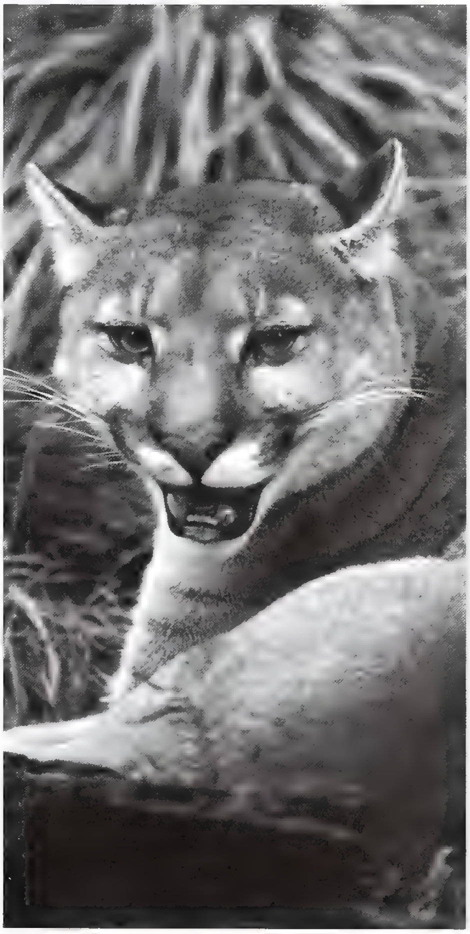
Scripture declares, "God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and love, and of a sound mind" (1 Timothy 1:7 KJV). Often I am too busy cowering in the corner to remember that truth. But truth it is. And it is such truth that makes us free (John 8:32). This alone is sufficient reason to ask God to grant us a hunger for the Word; that we might thirst for it as a parched deer searching for a cool spring. For how else are we to know his freedom but by knowing his Word? How else can we understand his power within us to resist the schemes of Satan? How else may we hope to stand at the threshold of hell itself and sense the peace of God wash over our hearts?

Though our guest's snores rattled on, my son went back to bed and quickly fell asleep. He no longer was frightened. He understood the truth.

Indeed, Satan's roar can seem ferocious. It can rob us of our joy, our freedom, our peace. But God wants us to know truth. He wants us to know that when confronted with the Word, Satan's roar sounds more like a whimper than a spine-chilling howl.

Because a whimper is what it really is.

Richard Maffeo is in the U.S. Navy.



Oh to be as a child in the arms of our heavenly Father; to stand with him at the threshold of hell itself and know—to really know—the glorious truth that Satan's rage has been forever deflected by Calvary.

Learning to pray

Praying in the evening

An evening song and prayer service has been a rich experience.

Marlene Kropf

When I was a child, my favorite worship services were Sunday evening hymn sings. Perhaps what made the services so special was the evening hymns themselves. I can still hear the congregation sing the hushed refrain, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts" of "Day Is Dying in the West," or the comforting stanzas of "Abide with me! fast falls the eventide."

One of the losses of current congregational life (in many places) is that we rarely gather for evening worship. I miss singing the wonderful evening hymns and visiting with others after church under the night sky. As darkness falls, it is easy to pray as we sing and to feel God's love and care.

Throughout history, Christians have always gathered (as did Jews before them) for morning and evening prayer. I wonder if one of the ways we might renew our life of prayer in congregations today would be to gather to sing and pray in the evening.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

During the past two years at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) we have experimented with a monthly Evening Song and Prayer service. Our original purpose was to offer a contemplative prayer experience with ample use of music. Since our chapel services are only 30 minutes long, we desired an opportunity for unhurried prayer. We wanted to experiment with the model of evening prayer from the Taize Community in France and make use of the music from Taize in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (HWB). In addition we hoped others from the Elkhart-Goshen area might join us for these services.

A typical Evening Song and Prayer service includes four acts of worship:

RNS

- **Gathering:** We sing several opening hymns (often evening hymns); we hear one of the Psalms and sing an alleluia response; after an opening prayer we wait in silence.
- **Hearing the Word:** We sing a hymn of light and light a candle representing the presence of Christ; we hear a reading from the Old Testament and sing hymns of response; we hear a Gospel reading in English and in a foreign language of one of our international students; we sing another hymn and wait in silence.
- **Responding to the Word** begins with spoken petitions and intercessory prayer in which everyone is invited to participate; we sing the Taize "Lord's Prayer" (HWB 554); then we carry small, lighted candles and kneel around the cross to offer our own personal prayers while the congregation continues to sing "Stay With Me" (HWB 242) or another chant; this is an unhurried time in which we continue to sing as long as someone is kneeling at the cross.
- **Sending** includes a spoken blessing and one or two hymns of benediction.

> ***If we open our doors and invite others to pray with us, we may discover another way to share the presence of Christ in the world.***

During our two years of experimenting we have learned several things. A simple, unchanging order of worship has served us well. People come to pray, not to be entertained with something new. We deliberately minimize verbal instructions in order not to intrude upon people's prayer. After having become accustomed to silence, people enter the quiet spaciousness with gratitude. A table full of lighted candles is all that is needed for visual focus. Although we sing mostly a cappella, the gifts of instrumentalists and soloists have deepened our prayer. Kneeling to pray around the cross, while new to many, has become a significant experience of meeting the Savior.

To our surprise and joy, quite a number of people from the surrounding community (including some who are not Mennonite) regularly join us for Evening Song and Prayer. Pastors and others who often lead worship find this an important time to simply "be" in God's presence. Some who are living with grief or facing difficult decisions count on this time of prayer to sustain them. Even though the service is scheduled at a late hour—9 to 10 p.m.—people stand around in groups and visit with each other afterward.

Evening Song and Prayer has been a rich experience for the AMBS campus. I wonder if other communities where Mennonites live and worship might also appreciate this kind of prayer. If we open our doors and invite others to pray with us, we may discover another way to share the presence of Christ in the world.

Are we redefining pastoral leadership?

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—Something needs to change in the way the Mennonite church calls, trains and supports its leaders.

On that the more than 50 people who attended a Consultation on Pastoral and Theological Leadership here July 25-27 agreed. Exactly what to do or how to do it wasn't as clear.

The two-day consultation brought together conference ministers, pastors, Mennonite seminary and college representatives, and denominational staff working in ministerial leadership offices of both the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC). Convener James Lapp, Souderton, Pa., said this was one of the first times that people in the church involved in calling and training pastors have met for dialogue and discussion.

"It was a refreshing surprise to find so much consensus and agreement," said Sally Schreiner, Chicago. "I came expecting more hostility between the educators and the practitioners."

One point of agreement was that many in the church are calling for a new style of leadership.

"During the '50s and '60s, we took the concept of the 'priesthood of all believers' and translated it into leadership categories that have created problems for us," said Ralph Lebold, Waterloo, Ont. "We got into an egalitarian mode that undermined the idea that people in leadership should make clear decisions."

As a result, almost everyone was seen as a leader, Lebold said. This brought confusion into the church "that we haven't worked through yet."

But there's a change. "Young people are ready for pastors with authority, people who will occupy an 'office,' " said Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind. This new generation does not quibble with the idea that leaders have to exercise authority, she said.

While many agreed, Don Rheinheimer, Monument, Colo., cautioned that there is an "adolescent quality" to this new interest. "People want leaders to run things up the flagpole. If they like it, they'll salute; if not, they'll shoot it down," Rheinheimer said.

"Are we as Mennonites prepared to move from a more functional definition of ministry to one that is more authoritative?" asked Lapp.

The authority of vision: While most participants said yes, Duane Beck, Elkhart, Ind., noted that the definition of authority needs to be one of "casting a vision and giving life to a group" rather than wielding power.

"A pastor does have a special role in the congregation," said Ryan Ahlgrim, Indianapolis. "When preaching, the pastor speaks for God. When I counsel, I am not a secular counselor; I am counseling for God."

Almost half my congregations don't speak English.

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower

In addition to working with new definitions of the office of ministry, participants struggled with how to attract more people to consider leadership roles in the church.

"The problem is that most young people don't see the church as a major interest," said Keith Harder, Hillsboro, Kan. "They're not hostile to the church; they just think it's irrelevant."

For Harder the task is to create a positive image of the church and of church vocations. "A lot of young people don't have a high view of pastors because a lot of churches don't have a high view of pastors," he said.

"These are our children we're talking about," said John Toews, Waterloo, Ont. "And a lot of what they embody they learned from their parents," he said.

Paul Versluis, Corvallis, Ore., saw part of the solution in the redefinition of what it means to be a pastor. "We may just find that a whole generation who didn't hear the call to pastoral ministry in the past may come back to our churches and hear that call,"

Inside the news

'Fall in love' with those you serve / p. 14

MCCers see Burundi atrocity / p. 15

Atlanta Olympics hide city's poor / p. 16

Olympic Games attenders visit Peace Factory / p. 17

Bombing brings terrorism home / p. 18

Preheim devotes life to service / p. 19

Peace Mennonite Church of Dallas, Texas, will celebrate its 25th anniversary Oct. 12-13. The congregation is trying to raise $12,500 for a Silver Anniversary Fund, to be divided between a church building project and the Ernst Harder Fund for support of a voluntary service worker at the Dallas Peace Center.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams received a special certificate of recognition for its work in Hebron from the North American Coordinating Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in Palestine. The award was presented at the 13th United Nations NGO "symposium on the question of Palestine," which began June 24. (*Signs of the Times*)

• • •

Gid Miller, a member of Bahia Vista Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., and a board member for the Gulf Coast States chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, was one of 230 passengers and crew on TWA flight 800 that went down off Long Island, N.Y., on July 17 after an explosion. Miller, 57, was a TWA pilot who was traveling to Paris to join a crew flying passengers back to New York. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Ruth and Ernst Harder, North Newton, Kan., who worked in various ministries in six countries and three languages, and Victor and Virginia Vargas of Hubbard, Ore., outreach workers among Hispanics in Oregon and Mexico, received the 1996 James and Rowena Lark Award (Ernst Harder was honored posthumously). The Lark Award is presented annually to Mennonites who have demonstrated creative leadership in evangelism and church development in North America.

• • •

Fall offerings by the Great Plains Seminary Education Program, sponsored by Western District and South Central conferences in conjunction with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, will be Job and the Jobian Tradition and Elementary Hebrew, both taught by Hesston College academic dean Paul Keim; Seminar in Theology, focusing on the theology of Gordon Kaufman, taught by Bethel College professor of Bible and religion Duane Friesen, and Elementary Greek, taught by Tabor College instructor of Bible Douglas B. Miller. For information and registration, contact Jacob T. Friesen, Director, P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117, (316) 283-6300.

• • •

Karuna Shri Joel, 31, executive secretary of the India Mennonite Brethren Women's conference, was killed, along with her infant daughter, in a vehicle accident on July 7. Mrs. Joel was riding on the back of a motor scooter driven by her husband, Rev. Menno Joel, when they were bumped by an auto-rickshaw. Mrs. Joel and her daughter were thrown into a river near the road, and both drowned. Rev. Joel and two other children on the scooter were not seriously injured. The mishap occurred near Hyderabad as the family was returning home from church. The funeral was held July 8. (Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services)

Versluis said.

Racial and ethnic diversity: The consultation also wrestled with how to educate leaders for the diverse racial and ethnic groups that now make up the church. "Almost half my congregations don't speak English," said Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif., a Pacific Southwest Conference minister.

The need to provide training for bivocational or part-time pastors also received consultation attention. Ann Stuckey of the Mennonite Church's leadership office noted that close to 70 percent of MC churches have memberships below 100, the size generally needed to support a full-time pastor.

"The question is, Are our educational institutions helping develop leaders for these situations?" said Lapp.

While no one answered directly, several had ideas for new things to try, such as requiring seminary and college Bible professors to spend extended time working in local congregations, or asking the seminaries to specialize in providing leadership training for specific groups.

As the consultation concluded, participants agreed that more attention was needed in these areas related to leadership:

- increased partnerships between educational institutions, conferences and congregations in calling and training leaders;
- more attention and discussion throughout the church on the meaning of "office" as related to ministry, including work on the theology of authority and of power in the Anabaptist-Mennonite Peace Church tradition;
- increased attention to providing training for leaders in the diverse groups making up the Mennonite church;
- increased attention to preparing people to be leaders in mission, both in what they say and how they live their lives.

The ideas from this consultation will go to both the GC and MC general boards, sponsors of the meeting, for more work. "Who knows what changes we will see in five years as a result," said Lapp.

Throughout the consultation were worship sessions that included singing, prayer, Bible study and testimonies of how people were led by God to become pastors. *J. Lorne Peachey*

'Fall in love' with those you serve

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—For the 21st century, the Mennonite church needs leaders who love Jesus, love the people they work with, have integrity, develop vision.

That was the way Gerald Gerbrandt, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, organized four Bible studies at the consultation on pastoral and theological leadership held here July 25-27.

"I invite you to fall in love with Jesus Christ," Gerbrandt urged consultation participants, all General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite Church leaders. This is not just head knowledge, he said, but involves the same kind of emotions "you had when falling in love with your spouse."

In the same way you must "fall in love with the people you serve," Gerbrandt said, "not in the abstract of loving people but in the concrete examples of those in the church [who are] hard to love. This love supersedes any kind of professionalism you need as a leader," Gerbrandt said.

Leaders must also be people of integrity, people who do what they say. Gerbrandt suggested that a major way in which this integrity is measured for leaders is by what they want for their children. "Too often the same leaders who tell the church that 100 percent [of one's] loyalty is to be to Jesus Christ have 'success' as the highest priority for their own children," he said.

And leaders of the church for the 21st century need to have vision: for how God is working in the world; for the role of the church in the world; for how this church should be structured, and for how leaders function in the church.

But vision is not most important, Gerbrandt reminded his audience. "The most foundational quality for any leader in the Mennonite church is love for Jesus Christ." *J. Lorne Peachey*

MCCers witness aftermath of Burundi atrocity

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—"Each one of you, look into yourself. What can you do to work for peace, without blaming the other side?" said Mennonite Central Committee volunteer Susan Seitz in a June 21 radio address to Burundians.

"You Tutsi soldiers and Hutu rebels who kill people simply because they are of the other ethnic group, think about your own wives and children. Could you kill them?" she asked.

Since 1993 an estimated 150,000 people have been killed in Burundi's ongoing civil war. MCC workers in Burundi have seen the aftermath of many atrocities committed by both government troops and rebel militia during this time.

Seitz' radio speech in June followed another tragedy that she and fellow volunteer Keith Miller witnessed while working at a hospital in Kibimba. The incident has increased the urgency MCC feels about its peacemaking efforts in Burundi.

> ***Think about your own wives and children. Could you kill them?***
> **Susan Seitz**

On June 13, Miller and Seitz returned to Kibimba after transporting several people to Bujumbura, the capital, for medical treatment. They discovered that government soldiers with automatic weapons, machine guns and bayonets had slaughtered more than 71 civilians, ranging from toddlers to an 80-year-old man. Among the wounded brought to the hospital was a 9-year-old girl shot through the lungs and with half her elbow sliced off.

When night fell, Seitz and Miller, the only expatriates in the area, investigated. They saw smoldering houses, photographed hastily dug graves and spoke with eyewitnesses. One woman recounted how she and her children hid in a coffee thicket, watching as soldiers hunted down and killed their screaming victims.

Miller and Seitz drew up a list of 41 names of the dead. Some 30 other bodies could not be identified.

When Miller and Seitz left Kibimba on June 15, townspeople were still discovering bodies. Up to 150 people may have died in the massacre that could have been in retaliation for earlier rebel killings of four people.

Dave Klassen

Love is action: *A Burundian man in Kibimba narrowly escaped being burned alive in a 1993 attack that killed some 70 others, including many children. In 1994, Mennonite Central Committee decided to place workers in Kibimba because it had become a symbol of hate and human savagery. Six short-term "peace presence" volunteers have served there, working in the hospital, organizing peace committees and conducting peace seminars.*

Miller and Seitz filed a report with United Nations observers based in Burundi and left the country. From Kenya, Seitz spoke on a radio program beamed into Burundi in the local language. She told what she and Miller had seen and made her plea for peace.

Seitz pointed out that more than 90 percent of Burundians are Christian and that Christ asks Christians to love their enemies. She challenged listeners: "Love is action. What action will you take?"

MCC works behind the scenes to support various Burundian church leaders from both Hutu and Tutsi groups explore what role the church can play in facilitating dialogue that may offer peaceful resolution to Burundi's violence. With the depth of pain and division that already exists, this is difficult and delicate work, depending on a fragile trust developed over the last two years of careful involvement.

Both Miller and Seitz have now completed their MCC assignments.

A group of musicians representing General Conference Mennonite, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Brethren congregations raised twice what they hoped for in a benefit concert given July 26 in Newton, Kan. "On With the Show," made up of professional musicians and faculty from several Kansas colleges, performed songs from Broadway musicals in a benefit for the Mennonite World Conference Travel Fund and made $4,000. The event was sponsored by Faith Mennonite Church, Newton.

• • •

Religion News Service reports that the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled June 19 that a state law requiring Amish horse-drawn buggies to display a red and orange triangle for safety reasons violates Amish religious rights. Eight Amish men in Clark County, Wis., challenged the law. They objected to the triangle because of its bright colors and because they said it was a "worldly symbol" that elevated human law above God's law. They offered instead to hang red lanterns on their buggies and outline the buggies with white reflective tape. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

More than 200 church leaders from Anabaptist congregations across the United States attended the New Life Assembly, June 14-16 at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. Plenary speaker was Thomas Troeger, professor of preaching and communication at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, who led participants in a service to remember their baptisms. June Alliman Yoder, associate professor of communication and preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, led a "seeker service," designed for people who do not attend church. Participants could attend three of 23 different workshops during the weekend, and enjoyed a special performance by the Fish-Eyes drama team of Lee Eshleman and Ted Swartz of Harrisonburg, Va. (*Becky Baile Crouse*)

The June issue of *Harper's* says that since 1970 the amount of clothing and shoes disposed of in landfills and incinerators in the United States has increased by 293 million tons. Eighty-two percent of Americans agree that "most of us buy and consume far more than we need." (*Current Thoughts & Trends*)

• • •

Christian Courier reports that Visual International of Cape Town, South Africa, is dramatizing the entire Bible on film, word for word. The company has already released Matthew and Acts. Each comes in a package of four one-hour videocassettes costing $100 U.S. The company hopes to finish filming the entire Bible by 2010. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Some folks in Canada think the human rights record of Kenyan president Daniel arap Moi stinks, so they've been making sure his mail smells good—enclosing a bar of soap with letters urging him to clean up his act. The campaign, which originated among church people in Saskatchewan, is now being promoted by the United Church of Canada and the Inter-church Coalition on Africa. (*The United Church Observer*)

• • •

The Basic Institute in Conflict Management and Mediation will be held Jan. 27-31, 1997, at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College. It is "an entry point for those interested in learning how to work well with conflict." Faculty for the sessions are Dalton Reimer and Ron Claassen, co-directors of the college's Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies. Complete information is available by e-mail at pacs@fresno.edu, on the World Wide Web at http://www. fresno.edu/pacs or by calling 1-800-909-8677.

Burundi needs more dialogue, negotiations

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Ongoing massacres such as the one Mennonite Central Committee workers in Burundi witnessed in June and one in mid-July in which some 300 people were killed, are increasing calls for international armed intervention to alleviate Burundians' suffering.

"We agree that desperate circumstances ... call for the international community to take resolute action," reads a statement released by MCC and the Friends Committee on National Legislation on July 25.

However, the two groups stress the need for increased dialogue and negotiations.

After consultation with MCC workers in Africa, MCC has drawn up a list of actions the international community could take, including more support for the local peacebuilding being done by religious and community leaders in Burundi and in surrounding countries; continuing presence of internationals in Burundi, perhaps even sending a contingent of trained, unarmed civilians that could be deployed throughout the country; continuing negotiations at the diplomatic level; imposing an international arms embargo on Burundi; blocking hate radio broadcasts and instead beaming messages that promote reconciliation.

MCC workers in Geneva, Washington, New York and Ottawa are giving the statement to policymakers and to other humanitarian agencies.

"We don't believe in combating violence with violence," explains John Rempel, who serves as MCC liaison to the United Nations in New York. "Additionally, armed intervention could escalate the violence because there are not two organized armies lined up to fight each other but rather pockets of people acting in anarchistic ways."

MCC has two MCC Burundi workers, both currently studying language in Tanzania.

The full text of the "Joint Statement on Burundi" is available from the MCC Peace Office, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.

Atlanta Olympics try to hide the city's poor

Atlanta (MCC)—Millions of people around the world were focused on this city for two weeks in July during the summer Olympic Games. Few were aware of the actual cost, in money or in lives affected.

"I watched the Olympics like everyone else," says Wendy Peters Bruner, program coordinator of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. service unit here. "It was exciting to see so many people from around the world putting their differences aside and coming together for this event.

"But most of those people don't know everything that happened to make this possible for them," she says.

Bruner works at the Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, an organization that advocates for homeless people and serves as a central network for service providers to the homeless.

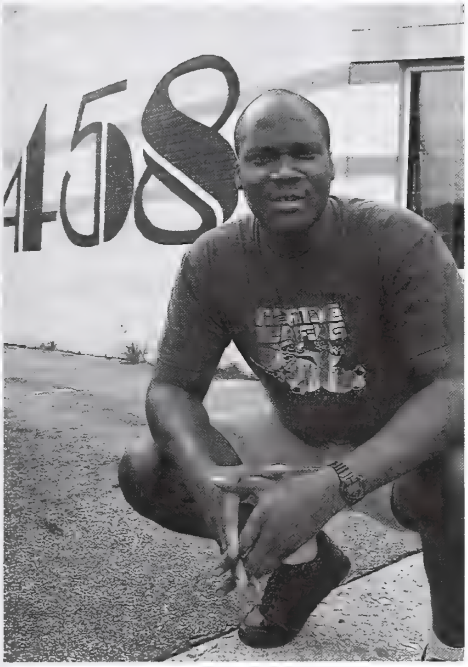
While many people eagerly anticipated such a major international event in Atlanta, homeless people and those who work with them have seen the negative effects for some time.

In a March 22 interview with an Atlanta newspaper, Task Force director Anita Beaty pointed to a "pattern of harassment and exclusion against street people" in the months leading up to July's Olympic Games.

One example was Project Homeward Bound. This effort, funded by Fulton County, in which Atlanta is located, offered homeless people one-way tickets out of the city. Applicants needed a referral by a local homeless shelter and a destination where they had either family or a job waiting—and they had to sign a paper promising not to return.

"It was blatant discrimination," says Bruner. "Many people don't know what their rights are; they may have signed the paper and thought they really couldn't come back."

Such action also increases homeless people's feeling of worthlessness, she



Howard Zehr

Hiding the poor: *Mayo Funderburg, coordinator of a church-run recovery program for people with drug addiction, at Cafe 458, a project that provides no-cost meals in a cafe setting to homeless people.*

says. "They feel bad enough about themselves ... anyone treated like this would feel they were being dumped in the trash."

Task Force staff estimate that 15,000 to 20,000 men, women and children in Atlanta have no permanent housing; the city's poverty rate is the second highest in the nation.

"There is no doubt the Olympics have hurt people," says Bruner. "The city has really tried to make poor people disappear."

This has been accomplished in many ways, she explains. For example, what she calls "the first Olympic venue" built was a pre-trial detention center. It was obvious, says Bruner, that the center was intended to house homeless people over the Olympics. Arrests of homeless people also skyrocketed in the weeks leading up to the Games.

An ordinance was passed by the Atlanta City Council in April that targeted loitering in downtown parking lots. The ordinance allowed police to arrest anyone seen trying door handles of cars, attempting to conceal themselves, carrying tools that could be used to break into a vehicle, running away from a police officer, or "acting in a manner not usual for law-abiding individuals under circumstances that warrant a justifiable and reasonable alarm."

The ordinance was "completely political, completely motivated by the business community," Beaty was quoted as saying, voicing the outrage of many others.

Calling the ordinance harassment, seven homeless people filed a lawsuit June 17, seeking to stop police officers from arresting homeless people without probable cause. The action resulted in the council suspending the ordinance.

"We are experiencing a double blow," says Bob Cramer, chair of the Task Force for the Homeless. "The Olympics have already taken away a substantial amount of affordable housing, and now homeless people, who have nowhere to go, are being pushed off the streets and into jail simply to make the city more attractive to tourists. Homelessness is not a crime, despite any interest that the city or the business community may have in making it such."

The Olympics have made things worse for homeless people, says Bruner. And the work of the Task Force will become more difficult.

"The Olympics are wonderful in many ways," she says, "but they come at such a cost—both financial and human."

The Atlanta MCC unit will close in September after 35 years of service. Local people will continue the work. *Deborah Fast*

Olympic Games attenders visit Peace Factory

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Like most Atlantans, Jonathan Larson and Vernon Schertz were excited when their city hosted the Olympic Games.

But unlike some, they weren't thinking about how they could make a quick buck from the event.

Instead, the two Mennonites wondered how they could bring a message of peace to the athletes and spectators who would be coming to Atlanta from all corners of the globe.

Their vision became a reality when the Peace Factory was exhibited only seven blocks from Centennial Park, July 21-Aug. 3.

It wouldn't have been possible without the financial and volunteer support from Mennonites across North America, says Larson. In addition to volunteers from Berea Church and

A movement like the U.S. religious right won't take root in Canada, says Brian Stiller, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. One reason is the influence of Canadian Mennonites, he says. In an interview following the opening of EFC's new office in Ottawa on March 20, Stiller notes that Mennonites "have a disproportionate influence on Canadian evangelicals, relative to their size." There are an estimated 2.8 million evangelical Protestants in Canada and around 118,000 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church members. (Mennonite Central Committee Canada)

• • •

"Piecing New Patterns from Old Cloth" is the theme for the 1996 Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC) biennial convention, set for Oct. 11-13 in Washington. BMC will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Activities will include workshops and an auction. The Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt will be in Washington during the weekend just two blocks from the convention hotel. Registration fees are based on each participant's income level. Information is available from BMC, Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406-0300; (612) 305-0315; e-mail BMCouncil@ aol.com.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams has extended its peacemaking efforts to Eastern Europe. Peacemaker Corps member Lena Siegers, Hamilton, Ont., began work in Jajce, Bosnia, in mid-June. Randy and Amela Puljek Shank are already in Bosnia. Suzanne O'Hatnick joined the team in August. The four-month project seeks to help create a peaceful climate for Serb and Muslim refugees returning to the historically diverse town of 40,000 near the Croatian border. CPT reservist Jim Satterwhite traveled to Chechnya June 2 for two months of intensive peacemaking. Satterwhite, a Quaker, is professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College, specializing in Slavic languages. He is fluent in Russian. (*Signs of the Times*)

"Rise with the Sun," an exhibit of African art collected by Ray Dirks of Winnipeg, has been accepted for display at the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, where it will run May to September 1997. Mennonite Central Committee is an exhibit supporter.

• • •

The 60th annual Indiana Mennonite Women's Missionary Rally will be held Oct. 10 at Shore Mennonite Church near Shipshewana, Ind. The theme will be "Women's Wellness," with three speakers, on spiritual, economic and physical needs. For more information, contact Jeannette Bechtel, 66583 CR 31, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 642-3924.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams invites supportive congregations to celebrate CPT Sunday on Oct. 27 (or another Sunday in October), to mark the third anniversary of Christian Peacemaker Corps, a team of people trained in nonviolence and peacemaking skills available on a full-time basis to enter emergency situations of violent conflict. December marks the 10th year since the organizational founding of CPT. A "CPT Sunday" packet is available from CPT at P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680, phone/fax (312) 455-1199; e-mail cpt@igc.org.

• • •

Rosedale Bible Institute and the Conservative Mennonite Conference are sponsoring a seminar for congregational youth leaders Sept. 27-29 on the Rosedale campus. Dwight Gascho, youth editor of the Conservative Conference publication *Brotherhood Beacon*, will be the keynote speaker, and 10 workshops will be offered. The seminar is aimed at those involved in or concerned about youth ministry, including youth sponsors, youth pastors, associate pastors and senior pastors For more information, write Sharon Wingert, Rosedale Bible Institute, 2270 Rosedale Road, Irwin, OH 43029; (614) 857-1311; fax (614) 857-1577.

Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, 45 people came from other locations to help with the Peace Factory.

The heavy commercialization of the Olympics heightened the impact of the Peace Factory, says Larson. "It stood against all the marketing, hype and hoopla."

The Peace Factory was a wake-up call for me.

Jonathan Larson

The Peace Factory did not have the expected number of visitors because Olympic participants, for the most part, stayed in the main thoroughfare.

However, over 500 people did participate in the hands-on exhibit, which was open daily. There was a jump in attendance the second week, due to publicity and response to the bomb that left two people dead in Centennial Park July 27, says Larson.

Dianne Robinson, Atlanta, was interested in the Peace Factory because of the violence she sees around her. "Christians are to be the light," says Robinson, who belongs to Community Bible Church in Atlanta. "We are to be the example. We have to take a stand on political issues for the sake of the kingdom."

Part of the exhibit included a "bombie," one of many left in Laos after the Vietnam War. For Robinson it showed "how terrible war is, how we are still killing, even though we are not occupying the territory anymore."

She applauded the commitment of those who staffed the exhibit, noting the importance of acting at the grassroots level. "We need to teach our children that this is a priority."

For Ruth Ann Welty, who coordinated lodging at Berea Church, the experience led her to feel connected with the broader church. "We are a small Mennonite community in … Atlanta. Sometimes that feels overwhelming. We received so much support from other Mennonite churches, it doesn't feel like we are so alone," she says. A total of 58 people stayed at the church.

"I sensed that the message [of the Peace Factory] needed to be focused not only on the Olympics but also in the context of Mennonites in Atlanta," says Larson.

"In the last several months before the Olympic Games, the homeless slowly became invisible in Atlanta. As a church, we can't allow that to happen," he says. "The Peace Factory was something of a wake-up call for me."

Bombing brings terrorism home

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Brad Boyd, who works as a prosecutor with the district attorney's office in Atlanta, deals with acts of hate on a daily basis.

So while he was upset by the bomb that exploded at Centennial Park during the Olympic Games, he didn't see this act of terrorism as much different from what he faces in juvenile court. The bomb left two people dead during the early morning of July 27.

Boyd believes Americans have insulated themselves from the reality of violence in their culture; they don't think anything will happen to them.

"I think most people are frightened by terrorism because it is random," says Boyd, one of over 500 Atlantans who viewed the Peace Factory exhibit at the Olympic Games.

"We have insular, isolated lives, which result in alienation and destructive behavior," says Jonathan Larson, who was instrumental in bringing the Peace Factory to Atlanta. "All of us felt anguish about what happened. But, at the same time, we felt it confirmed the presence of the Peace Factory."

Malinda Berry, graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College and a Peace Factory volunteer, learned that the woman who was killed in the bombing had been married to Berry's second cousin. Still, Berry found a measure of hope in an ecumenical service she attended the morning after the bombing. A number of ministers at the service urged the participants to be peacemakers.

Later during the Olympics there was a bomb threat at City Hall, and employees had to be evacuated from the building. Berry noticed a number of them were wearing buttons from the Peace Factory exhibit that read "God's people make peace." *Carla Reimer*

The Peace Factory continues to travel. For more information, contact Susan Mark Landis, P.O. Box 173, Orrville, OH 44667; (219) 293-7131; smlandis@aol.com.

Preheim devotes life to service

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Vern Preheim was studying agriculture at South Dakota State College when he went to see a movie about Peter Marshall, a well-known preacher during the 1940s. The film radically altered his life.

A native of Freeman, S.D., Preheim recalls how he had planned to operate the family farm once his father retired. But after viewing *A Man Called Peter,* he knew he wanted to pursue pastoral ministry instead.

Classmates and faculty at Freeman Academy and Junior College had often urged Preheim to consider this line of work. Still, he had some fear about what his father would say about his new interest. To his relief, his father supported his decision.

Forty-one years later, Preheim sees the course of events that led him to a lifetime of service with Mennonite institutions as "almost a miracle."

Service 'almost a miracle': *Preheim*

As of Aug. 15, Preheim ended his service as general secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), a position he held since 1980. He has also worked for the GC Board of Christian Service and with Mennonite Central Committee in Algeria, Zaire and Akron, Pa. In September Preheim becomes resource development coordinator for MCC Central States region.

The decision to integrate the General Conference and the Mennonite Church was a fulfillment of a dream for him. Preheim has long hoped that the two denominations will one day merge.

To this day, he marvels at the way the Holy Spirit moved during the many committee meetings about integration. "Disagreements were worked out in a good spirit. There was never anger. It was so gratifying," he says.

He recalls how at the first meeting of the integration committee, "it wasn't at all clear where we would come out at the end of the journey. After six years, the committee clearly felt that integration was the will of the Lord."

Preheim has been a long-time advocate for a united Mennonite church because he believes "we will have a more effective witness in the world if we have a larger denomination."

"I see MC/GC integration as a step in the right direction," he says, adding that he would like to see the formation of a denomination that includes all Anabaptist-oriented groups. "The reasons for integrating MCs and GCs can be applied to other Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups," he says.

Preheim recently has become concerned that the people who are unhappy with the denomination are no longer attending the triennial sessions.

As a result, "the discussion is less animated. In the 1960s, I sensed people came and talked, even though there was tension. Now it seems that people don't want to hash things out," he says. "On both sides of an issue there is a lack of patience to try to understand each other."

The fact that 17 churches withdrew their membership from the General Conference during his period of leadership has been a source of pain. Usually these churches withdrew without dialogue with the conference.

"There have been too many. It boggles my mind that these churches think they are more biblical than the conference yet don't follow Matthew 18," he says. "Each withdrawal has been like losing a child."

One of his dreams for the Mennonite church is that everyone learn to have the grace to listen to and respect each other. "We must always try to understand the other person from his or her point of view," he says.

He also would like to see congregations take more risks in terms of worship and leadership so young people, in particular, feel a part of the Mennonite church. "We are missing things because we are too set in our ways," says Preheim.

There is much to celebrate within the church, too, says Preheim: the commitment to discipleship, peace, social justice and service.

Preheim leaves the general secretary position with a keener awareness of evil in the world yet also with "a greater sense of the Spirit working in people's lives. ... I have an almost constant sense of being in God's presence." *Carla Reimer*

Mennonite lawyers plan to bring their association under the umbrella of Mennonite Economic Development Associates. The Mennonite Lawyers Association will operate as a "member segment" of MEDA and hold its gatherings in conjunction with MEDA's annual convention.

• • •

The Washington Post Weekly Edition **reports that the amount of money Americans bet legally has exploded 2,800 percent in the last 20 years, from $17 billion in 1974 to $482 billion in 1994. Americans lost $40 billion of what they bet, more than six times what they spent on all spectator sports combined. Seventy million people attend pro baseball games each year, and 125 million go to government-sanctioned casinos. Adults now spend more money gambling than they do on children's toys. (*Context*)**

• • •

Americans contributed nearly $144 billion to charity in 1995, up nearly 11 percent from the previous year, according to a study by the American Association of Fundraising Council, reported by Evangelical Press. The group attributes the rise to increased personal income and better fund-raising techniques. Religious organizations received about half of all charitable contributions in 1995, a 5.39 percent increase from 1994. Meanwhile, the United States ranked fourth in the world (Canada was seventh) in total dollars spent on foreign aid in 1995 but last among major industrialized countries when foreign aid is taken as a percentage of gross national product (Canada was sixth), according to figures released by the Paris-based Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. (*Christian Leader; The Washington Post*)

Record

Israeli Interior Minister Eli Suissa announced that work will begin this summer on a Jewish settlement slated to be built on land southeast of Jerusalem that was confiscated from Palestinians. Some 6,000 housing units are planned for land belonging to residents of the Christian village of Beit Sahur and the Muslim village of Umm-Tuba. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Hal Lindsey, author of *The Late Great Planet Earth*, has made a new video, *The Final Battle*, which updates predictions made in his bestselling book. Some of those predictions included the "secret rapture" of the church by 1981, the return of Christ in 1988 and the invasion of Israel by Iran and the Soviet Union in 1985. (*Liberty*)

• • •

Choice Books, the 34-year-old book distribution ministry of Mennonite Board of Missions, will become an independent organization effective Jan. 1, 1998. Choice Books maintains an extensive network of volunteers and paid staff who service more than 4,000 locations. It is a cooperative ministry of seven Anabaptist groups, including the General Conference Mennonite Church. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee executive secretary John A. Lapp and 10 other representatives of U.S. church-based relief and service organizations met with Michael Camdessus, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, on June 11 in Washington. The religious leaders expressed their concern over the fact that more than 30 of the world's poorest countries are shouldering immorally heavy debt loads for IMF loans incurred by their governments. It was the first time Camdessus, who has been in his position for nine years, has met with an ecumenical group of U.S. church leaders.

AIMM—Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service
SALT—Serving And Learning Together

MINISTERS

Kevin Goertzen was installed July 21 as pastor at Goessel (Kan.) Church.

Iris and **Leo Hartshorn** have resigned as co-pastors at Houston Church. Iris will become director of Peace and Justice Ministries for MCC U.S. in Akron, Pa.

Dewayn Isaac has resigned as pastor at First Church, Clinton, Okla.

Michelle Krehbiel is youth/assistant pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan.

Don and **Jan Rheinheimer** will be co-pastors at Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo., beginning Jan. 1, 1997.

WORKERS

Heidi Beachy, affiliated with Fellowship of Hope Church, Elkhart, Ind., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, as a child-care worker in an orphanage.

Adela and **Richard Bergen**, Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., have begun two-year COM/AIMM terms in Senegal, developing a new outreach effort among Muslim people there.

Janet and **Walter Bergen**, Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., completed their COM/MCC term in Moscow in July.

Jean-Victor Brosseau, Deux-Montagnes, Quebec, is MCC Canada Quebec representative. He replaces **Deborah Martin-Koop**.

Rudy and **Sharon Dirks**, Bethany Church, Virgil, Ont., have begun three-year COM/AIMM terms in Gaborone, Botswana. Rudy will teach Bible and train African Independent Church leaders, Sharon will teach English.

Debra Ellis, Northglenn, Colo., began a one-year MVS term June 24 as a placement facilitator with Adoption Option in Winnipeg.

Donna and **Loren Entz**, COM workers, have returned to Burkina Faso after a one-year North America Assignment.

Tara Forshaw, Faith Church, Leamington, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia, Russia, as an English tutor.

J. Bergen

Allan and **Maryvel Friesen**, Tiefengrund Rosenort Church, Laird, Sask., will begin a COM term in Paraguay in January 1997. Allan will teach Bible, Anabaptist history and theology in Spanish-speaking Mennonite congregations.

Elizabeth Horst, Hesston (Kan.) Church, began a one-year MVS term July 15 in Chicago, as a teacher with the Chicago school district.

W. Bergen

Brosseau

Ellis

D. Entz

L. Entz

Forshaw

A. Friesen

M. Friesen

Pat and **Rad Houmphan**, Langley, B.C., began a three-year COM/Eastern Mennonite Missions term in July, working with church planting and evangelism in Thailand.

Daryl Johnson, First Church, McMinnville, Ore., began a two-year COM/China Educational Exchange assignment in July, teaching English at Northeast University in Shenyang.

Rachel Evangeline Jones, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Tanzania as a day-care center worker.

Sarah Kingsley, Fellowship of Hope Church, Elkhart, Ind., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Asuncion, Paraguay, as a social work assistant.

Lori Klassen, Emmanuel Church, Winkler, Man., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Curitiba, Brazil.

Mark Klassen, Coaldale (Alta.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Curitiba, Brazil, as a child-care worker.

Kay Martens, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., began a two-year COM/China Educational Exchange term in July, teaching English at Anqing Teachers' College in Anhui.

Craig Martin, Erb Street Church, Waterloo, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Jamaica, working in a boys' home.

Joelle Martin, Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in N'Djamena, Chad, as a church worker.

Chris and **Laura Mullet Koop**, Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church and Bluesky (Alta.) Church, have begun two-year COM/Mennonite Board of Missions/MCC terms in South Korea teaching English and Bible.

Jonathan Neufeld, Waterloo-Kitchener (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, began a one-year MVS term June 24 with Winnipeg Harvest.

Timothy James Plett, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term at Ekuphileni Bible Institute in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, as a teacher and librarian's helper.

Etsuko and **Russell Sawatsky**, COM workers in Japan, began a two-year North America Assignment in June in Chilliwack, B.C.

Terry Sawatsky is MCC Africa co-secretary. He replaces **Eric Olfert**. Sawatsky previously served with MCC in Chad and Zaire.

Terry Schellenberg will be principal at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., beginning Dec. 1. He replaces **Bert Lobe**.

Horst

P. Houmphan

R. Houmphan

Johnson

L. Klassen

M. Klassen

Martens

Martin

C. Mullet Koop

L. Mullet Koop

Neufeld

Plett

E. Sawatsky

R. Sawatsky

T. Sawatsky

MVS
SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Respite Care
Berne, IN

Social Worker
St. Louis, MO

Refugee Case Mgr.
Sioux Falls, SD

Friends for Seniors
Kansas City, KS

VORP
Fresno, CA

Mennonite Voluntary Service
PO Box 347 Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

First Mennonite Church, Calgary, a medium-sized General Conference Mennonite congregation, is looking for a **lead pastor**. Candidate must be committed to Christ and the church as summarized in the Mennonite Confession of Faith. Strong leadership and public-speaking skills would be assets.

Please send inquiries and resumes to **Ruth Grissith, 10264 Hidden Valley Drive NW, Calgary, AB T3A 5B7; (403) 275-8775; fax (403) 246-1755**.

Goshen College seeks applicants for **director of student activities**, beginning immediately. Qualifications include a B.A. (master's preferred) in physical education, athletic administration, recreation or similar fields. Responsibilities include administration of facilities and campus services and supervision of student activities. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resume and three references to **Norm Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7539; fax (219) 535-7660;** e-mail **normlk@goshen.edu**; web site **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be received until the position is filled.

Reviews

FILMS

NO EASY ANSWERS

Courage Under Fire *written by Patrick Sheane Duncan, produced by John Davis, Joseph M. Singer and David T. Friendly, directed by Edward Zwick*

Reviewed by Melanie A. Zuercher, assistant editor

As the opening credits for *Courage Under Fire* rolled over actual news footage from before and during the Persian Gulf War, I stared at the screen thinking, "Hey, this was *my* war!" I have seen many of the Vietnam War blockbusters—*Apocalypse Now, Born on the Fourth of July, Platoon*—and no doubt my fascination with them has to do with dim memories of body counts and protesters on the screen of my family's first TV. But the Persian Gulf War is the one that conjures for late Baby Boomers, Baby Busters and Generation Xers memories of exactly where we were when the bombing of Baghdad began, the one that brought visions of *Star Wars* and video games into the evening news. It is the only war I have ever protested.

There are two intertwining stories in the movie. One involves Col. Nat Serling (Denzel Washington). While commanding a tank battalion on the Kuwait border, he accidentally gives the order to fire on one of his own tanks, killing his best friend. Back in the United States, he is asked to finish up a routine investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Army helicopter pilot Karen Walden (Meg Ryan), who is up for the first medal of honor ever given to a woman in combat.

Serling leaves his family to conduct the investigation, but also because he can't escape a recurring nightmare about his friend's fiery death and his own guilt over the fact that he went along with his superiors in covering up the incident. And as he visits with each of the survivors of the Medivac unit Walden commanded, he finds he is not the only one trying to blot out indescribably painful memories. As Serling picks up discrepancies in the accounts of the soldiers, it becomes clear they are keeping a terrible secret.

Twentieth Century Fox

Who is the enemy? *Tank commander Denzel Washington storms into battle.*

The movie keeps you guessing until the end: Was Karen Walden a hero or not? Will Nat Serling learn to live with himself again?

Courage Under Fire is worth seeing because it gives no easy answers, paints no clear line between right and wrong, cowardice and heroism. The "enemy" being fought on screen is not really the Iraqi forces but the demons that came back with the individuals around whom the plot revolves. Yet despite the fact that the Iraqis have no faces or names, I was reminded of how many thousands of them died. Conventional wisdom of the time claimed that since this war had more media coverage than any in history, nothing was hidden. But this movie reminds us that, despite Pentagon hype about the Persian Gulf War being "quick and clean," the toll in human suffering was incalculable. War is not a video game.

The movie is rated R for violent content and language. The profanity is not gratuitous; I have no doubt that soldiers really talk this way, if not worse. Nevertheless, it's good to go prepared for it.

BOOKS

WORK FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice *by Paul Kivel (New Society Publishers, 1996, 243 pages)*

Reviewed by Joan Gerig, Chicago

Another white male writes a book on ridding the world of racism? Nevertheless, the author's perspective and analysis led me to make room for *Uprooting Racism* on my shelf. Kivel's writing incorporates his Jewish culture and experience with anti-Semitism; although his treatment of white Christianity's promotion of racism is uneasy reading, it is an important viewpoint.

Racism, in this book, is not just black and white. A brief history of how

TOURMAGINATION

MEXICO '96

November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

white Americans have related to Native Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics and Jewish people, in addition to African-Americans, lays the groundwork for a section on fighting institutional racism.

Kivel set out to write a guide for critical thinking and social action. Statements like, "Only justice can put out the fire of racism" and, "Unequal distribution of wealth is a keystone of racism," are representative of his critique of our racist society. Also beneficial is the way he connects racism to sexual abuse and masculinity training.

Especially helpful are the 17 pages of exercises and assessment questions, with topics ranging from "What People of Color Need from White Allies" to "Assessing Religion." Used in one's own reflection or in groups, the questions can move us from understanding our personal experiences toward actively "putting out the fire of racism."

The chapter on affirmative action challenges us to think critically about public policy issues and states that affirmative action is more than a legal issue. Anything we do to eliminate racism is affirmative action. Reminding the reader that affirmative action has opened up opportunities for many white people too, Kivel asserts that "attacking affirmative action is self-destructive for all … except the rich."

This book belongs with *Enter the River* by Jody Miller Shearer, a Mennonite, and *Dismantling Racism* by Joe Barndt, a Lutheran, not so much on our shelves as in our lives.

REFORMATION SPIRIT

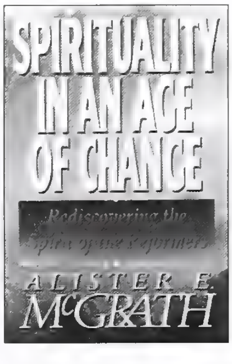
Spirituality in an Age of Change *by Alister E. McGrath (Zondervan, 1994, 206 pages)*

Reviewed by Ted VanderEnde, Findlay, Ohio

Alister McGrath, a lecturer in theology in England and America, has written this book to encourage the Christian reader to rediscover the "Spirit of the Reformers." He believes that a contemporary adaptation of that spirit can revive the modern evangelical church.

That church is in a deep crisis, characterized by a marketing spirit and an inability to disciple new believers because spirituality is equated with the search for personal happiness. There is little evidence of true corporate worship, classic pastoral care and the love for and practice of the traditional spiritual disciplines. In this, McGrath joins authors like Thomas Oden and others to critique today's commercialized Christianity.

The spirit of the Reformation, according to McGrath, is a pattern worth following because it urges the church to go "back to the sources"—the New Testament and the apostolic era—and exemplifies the need for constant reform. Such a spirit involves an ability to apply biblical theology to all of life, the call to believers to grow individually strong within the worshiping community and, above all, a firm knowledge and practice of the Scriptures, including an exegetical approach to the teaching and preaching rather than the more emotive and piecemeal handling of the Bible in most modern pulpits.


SPIRITUALITY IN AN AGE OF CHANGE
Rediscovering the Spirit of the Reformers
ALISTER E. McGRATH

Furthermore, biblical teaching must constantly be tested so it harmonizes with the living tradition of the faith. As a point of interest, McGrath refers here to the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, which, in his eyes, suffered from "the right of every individual to interpret the Scripture in whatever way he or she pleased." As a Mennonite reviewer of this book, I found it a somewhat shallow and incomplete evaluation of a segment of the Reformation that contributes much to living out the life of Christ radically in the present moment.

With many references to Luther and Calvin, McGrath, in the middle chapters of the book, seeks to establish the ability of the Reformation to deal with suffering, struggling faith, doubt and anxiety. In contrast to much of modern church life, the spirit of the Reformation taught believers to trust God in difficult and trying times and allowed for doubt and anxiety as part of true spirituality.

Perhaps more important are those chapters that seek to deal with the evangelical inability to affect modern society. Again, the approach of the Reformation saw the church as an agent, the city of God, called to influence and sacralize society, for example, in the interpretation of work as an extension of worship to God.

Finally, the depth of the doctrine of grace and the proper view of justifying faith and good works makes the spirit of the Reformation pertinent for today. For these reasons McGrath concludes that "the spirituality of the Reformation is a starting point and resource for renewing and refreshing a tired church."

There are many great biblical principles highlighted in this volume that indeed could revitalize many of our churches. Mennonite readers will miss any positive reference to the other Reformers who contributed so much to that era of renewal, but it should not keep us from heeding the warning that a church not truly "in reform" is a dying church.

Resources

- **How to Read the Bible: Building Skills for Bible Study** by David Schroeder (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) is the latest in the Generation Why Bible study series for high school youth.
- **Decide for Peace** by Eddy Hall (Faith & Life Press, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.) is a youth guide for personal Bible study on conscientious objection.
- **Landmines: Fallout of War** is a four-page study/action guide on landmines, their consequences and the response of North American churches and their worldwide partners. Available from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; 30¢ U.S. each or 4/$1; order no. ED 9659.
- **Gifts Handed Down** by J. Daniel Hess (Herald Press, 1996, $7.95 U.S./ $11.35 Cdn.) contains the reflections of the author on the gifts given him by his parents—gifts such as purity, civility and serenity.
- **We Sat Where They Sat** by Marie E. Cutman (MecPublishing, P.O. Box 22, Morgantown, PA 19543; $14.99 U.S. paper/$19.99 hardcover plus shipping) is the story of twins and mission workers Ada and Ida Stoltzfus and their 37 years serving in Hebron, West Bank.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 509
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Reflect God's reign together

We in the church are the advance team for the reign of God. We know what the future is going to be like, and we are to reflect that reign and proclaim it.

Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church, made these points as she spoke at my congregation's annual retreat Aug. 9-11.

As she described the characteristics of citizenship in God's reign from the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11), I thought, How can God entrust such a lofty vision in the hands of such weak, sinful people? God's reign seems too big, too holy to involve the likes of us.

But in her third talk, Lois had us look at the Book of Acts, where the Holy Spirit comes to the waiting church and brings them power they had not believed possible. The power of the Holy Spirit, she said, came to the disciples as they waited, per Jesus' instruction (1:4). The way they waited, and the way we are to wait, is with an attitude of self-surrender, of giving ourselves into God's hands.

God's reign is to be reflected in every aspect of our lives, and particularly in our communal life as a church.

She pointed out that the Holy Spirit worked through the church as a group, not just through an individual or two. Today, she said, much is written and spoken about spirituality, but the emphasis is on individual spirituality. In Acts, however, as in the writings of many of the early Anabaptists, the emphasis is on communal spirituality.

And the work of the Holy Spirit, she said, is not seen only in worship and prayer, but in a variety of actions, such as believers selling their possessions and sharing with those in need, eating together, healing others (Acts 2:43-46). Lois asked us to think about when we had experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit as a church, which was a helpful exercise. We realized we need to speak about such times and remind ourselves when we sense the Spirit's presence among us.

Tears and laughter: One of the highlights of our congregation's retreat came at the end of our Sunday morning worship. We went around the room and heard each person say what he or she wanted prayer for, what each was facing in the near future. People shared about their jobs, their family relationships, where they are in their stage of life. Often tears came. At other times laughter erupted.

What became evident to us is that God wants to work among us, wants us to experience the Spirit's presence, in all aspects of our lives, not just on Sunday mornings. We closed by singing a song based on Colossians 3:15-17. Verse 17 reads, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

We gained a renewed understanding that God's reign is to be reflected in every aspect of our lives, and particularly in our communal life as a church. We joined hands and prayed with the knowledge that, as the song says, to "walk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," we cannot walk alone. To reflect God's reign and proclaim it to the world, we need each other. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

What parents can do / p. 9

'As long as God gives me strength' / p. 11

Let's have diversity on our boards / p. 12

$2.00

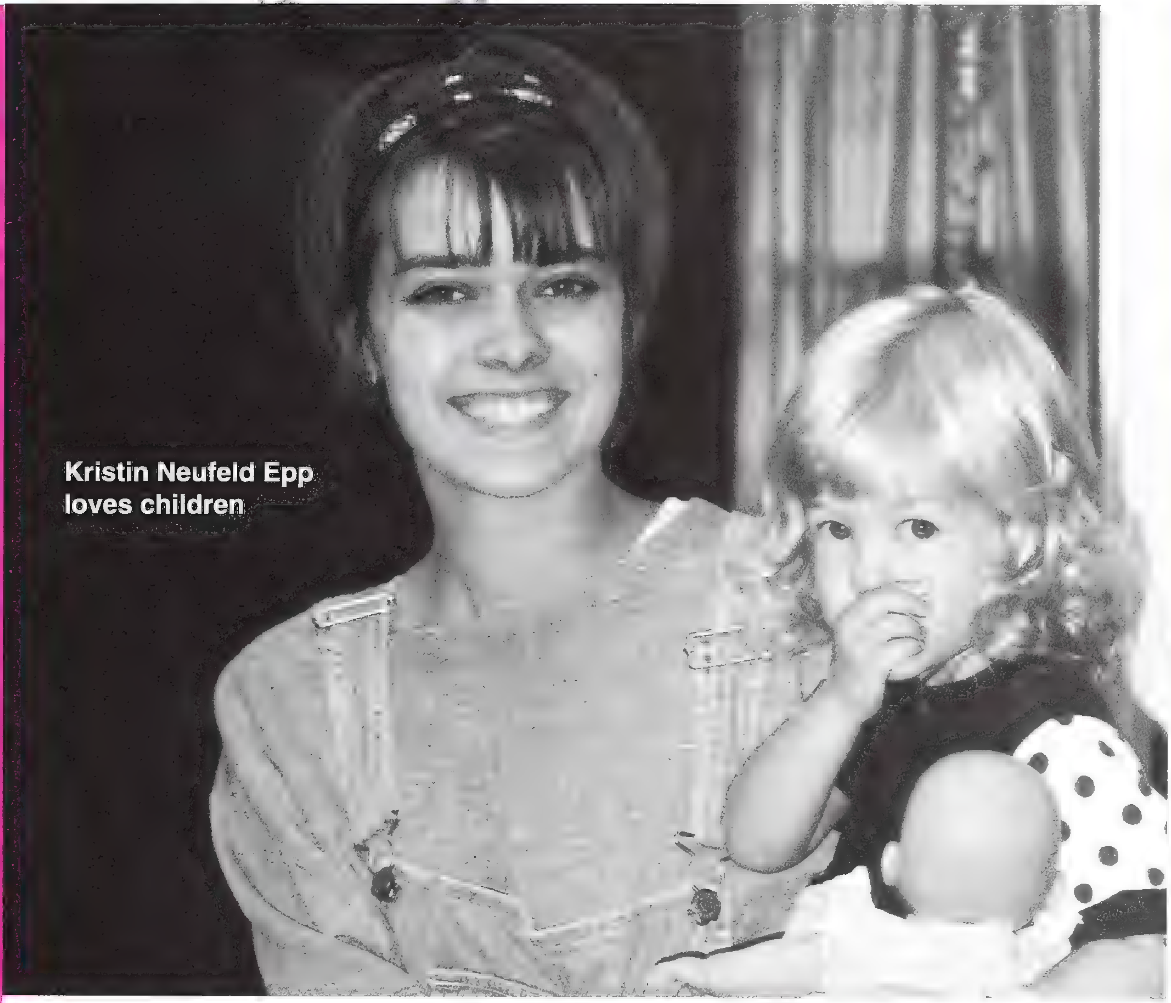
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 17
SEPTEMBER 10, 1996

SEP 18 '96
ELKHART
LIBRARY

- Let the children come (page 3)
- What about the children? (page 6)
- Be careful what you say (page 8)



Kristin Neufeld Epp loves children

Love the children

Prologue

Fewer and fewer voices, it seems, are speaking out for children today. Budgets tend to reflect our priorities, and our governments' budgets—and perhaps our congregational budgets as well—show that children's welfare is not a high priority.

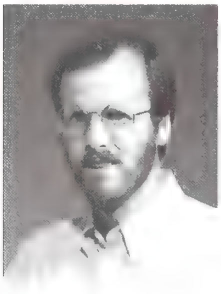
Jesus taught a different standard. He said that one must be like a child to enter God's reign (see the editorial on the back page). Others also speak out for children. One of these is Kristin Neufeld Epp. My interview with her begins on page 3. Try as I might, I could not capture her dynamic energy in her care for children. I hope every congregation has someone like her.

Another who speaks for children is Martha Martin (page 6). Her daughter Mariann writes about Martha's ability to care for children, and she gives us some of Martha's views.

Jean Guarino offers some advice about the effects of our words and our attitudes on children (page 8).

We also present some things parents can do to build up their teen (page 9).

At the other end of the age spectrum is Evelyn Lambert, 78, who also ministers to children, particularly to Old Colony Mennonites who have moved to Kansas (page 11).



J.B. Miller calls our church to do what it takes to include women and non-Anglos on our boards (page 12).

As another school year begins, take time to pray for children. *gh*

Next issue: The call to Christian education

Cover: Photo by Gordon Houser

Contents

FEATURES

3 Let the children come

Kristin Neufeld Epp loves children and has some insights about teaching them to be kind and friendly.

6 What about the children?

How to survive in a room with 12 little children for 2 1/2 hours without going up in smoke

8 Be careful what you say

Children raised by parents with positive, affirming attitudes will become caring, self-confident adults.

DEPARTMENTS

10 Letters
11 Profile
12 Fiscal health
13 News
19 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Gordon Houser

Let the children come

Kristin Neufeld Epp loves children and has some insights about teaching them to be kind and friendly.

Kristin Neufeld Epp's diminutive size is misleading, especially when you watch her with children. She is a powerhouse of energy. She's usually holding one, and sometimes two or three at a time, and she's often down on the floor, kneeling or sitting to be at their level.

"I love children," she says. "I always have." She remembers how excited she was when she was 6 years old and her mother took her with her to care for a younger child.

Kristin, 22, is the director and teacher of the early childhood program at New Creation Fellowship Church, a General Conference Mennonite Church congregation in Newton, Kan.

The origin of the program, which is for children ages 2 through kindergarten, she says, goes back to the summer of 1994, when Kristin, then a student at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., took part in the Ministry Inquiry Program. Tim and Kathy Wiens, members of NCFC, where Kristin is also a member, proposed the idea of a day camp at the church. They envisioned a combination of a vacation Bible school and a day care and especially wanted to reach out to parents who could not afford preschools.

Kristin ran the day camp, with the church's approval, and it proved a success. A year later, after Kristin graduated from Bethel in May 1995, she held the day camp again. Then the Wienses brought to the church a proposal that Kristin operate an early childhood program at the church's facility through the school year.

The congregation affirmed the idea and devoted $4,000 per semester for Kristin's salary and for scholarships for parents who could not afford the tuition.

American flag: This last point was important for Kristin. She had hoped to work in a public school, partly because she wanted to reach out to all children, not just those who could afford it. But public schools had other elements that gave her pause, like having an American flag in the classroom.

Since the early childhood program allowed anyone to attend, Kristin agreed. In the first year, 26 children participated, though she had no more than nine at a time, since she offered half-day classes, and some did not come every day.

This past summer she held her third day camp, and a new school year begins in September. She says it's difficult being both director and teacher, but she tries not to mix the roles. When she's with the kids, she says, she is the teacher. She does "director" business, like talking with parents who haven't paid, after hours, either by phone or letter.

The work is demanding, she admits, but "I haven't experienced a hint of burnout," she says. "I can't get enough of the children; I even dream about them."

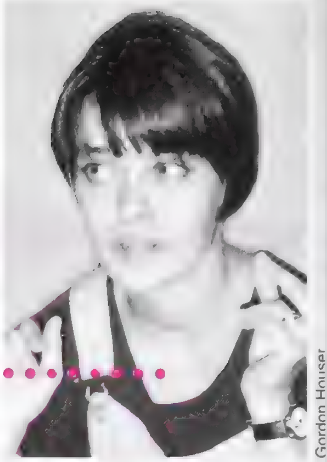
This may sound naive or idealistic until you meet Kristin. She exudes compassion for children. When she's with them, her face lights up, and she offers them her full attention. This is

A safe place: *Kristin with one of her students wearing Play-Doh*

Jerry Neufeld Epp

"It's amazing how just loving someone can make a difference in their behavior."

Kristin Neufeld Epp


Gordon Houser

not just some technique she's learned but arises out of who she is.

How did she get to be this way? She says she learned a lot from her parents, particularly her mom, who was at home with her and her brother Jon as they grew up. "We were simply not allowed to be mean to each other," she says. Instead they discussed a lot. When they had a conflict, they talked it out, "more than I wanted to sometimes," she says.

Environment: She carries this philosophy to her teaching of children. The most important thing about the early childhood program, she says, is the environment. She tries to make it a safe place where the basic rules are to use kind words and a gentle voice and to not hit anyone or throw things.

The program has high expectations, and these begin with Kristin. "I tell [the children] that because they're young they may sometimes forget to speak with a gentle voice and not hit, but I'm a grown-up, and I promise never to hit you or yell at you." She also tells the children she will never lie to them.

From her own behavior and her expectations of them she builds trust. She tells the kids to say no and express anger when someone hurts them. She sees each child as an individual with unique needs or abilities. For example, children have different attention spans, so she cannot expect them all to sit through an activity.

She uses a curriculum, one geared toward helping children become competent in their five selves: intellectual, creative, physical, emotional and social. And she uses Bible stories, focusing on the Old Testament in the fall and the New Testament in the spring.

The main goal, though, is that the children learn to be kind, friendly people. And the key to that, she says, is a kind, friendly environment.

What happens when a child does hit another child? "That happened today," she says. "A boy hit a girl, and I looked horrified and said, 'How can you do that when we're to be kind?' Then I ask how he can apologize to her to make it right. He does, and we go on."

Children are basically good, she says, but they sometimes forget and slip into unkind behavior. "I see each conflict as a mystery," she says. "We try to keep the focus not on bad behavior but on being kind to each other."

A child may say, "But I do this at home." In that case, Kristen says, "I tell them that makes me sad, because I think it could hurt someone."

Power Rangers: Much of her teaching happens in the course of the day. Some of the kids are active, and they'll want to do moves like the Power Rangers. She'll tell them those moves are cool, but we shouldn't treat people that way. We try to talk out our conflicts. "I tell them about the way Jesus treated people," she says. "It's very new to many of them."

She has the kids pick up their toys, then praises them for their hard work. She says she wants them to know that in the world they will have to clean up after others as well as themselves.

The work is not always easy, she admits. "During the first summer day camp I sometimes came home sobbing because I was exhausted" trying to use techniques like "time out" or keeping track of behavior points. Those aren't bad, she says, but she's more comfortable with her current approach, which basically involves treating children with respect.

She gives the kids respect, she says, because they deserve it, because it may be the one place they can go and be listened to, and because as the grown-up it is her responsibility.

Young children often need simply to be cared for, she says. She's heard teachers say, "I'm not their parent." "But I wish teachers would be parents to kids," Kristin says, "all the way through high school."

When one of her students misbehaves, she immediately feels compassion for them, she says. Often she'll hold the child or sit and talk with them. "It's amazing how just loving someone can make a difference in their behavior," she says.

She bristles at the way children are often treated in our society. She refers to an essay by Barbara Kingsolver (in her book *High Tide in Tucson*), who says that kids here are just tolerated until they grow up. We don't delight in them.

When Kristin sees children being mistreated she'll often stare at the adult doing it. She realizes she can't

Love the children

"At that moment I didn't care if he hit me. I wanted him to know that what he was doing was wrong."

Gordon Houser

Down at their level: *Kristin and Joylin Hall*

fully empathize with the adult because she's not a parent, and she understands what it's like to want to hurt a child, but it pains her.

Once she was outside a restaurant when a father began raging at his little daughter. Kristin stood nearby so that the man knew he was being watched. "At that moment I didn't care if he hit me," she says. "I wanted him to know that what he was doing was wrong."

She has a strong belief that we can raise healthy, happy children and that we can respond to them with logic and honesty. Her energy for working with children, she says, comes from being called to it. However, she sometimes has difficulty loving certain kids. At those times, she says, she forces herself to show them love. And on bad days she overcompensates by being extra nice to the children.

How long does she want to do this? "For the rest of my life, if I can," she says. "I love it. I love children."

Gordon Houser is editor of The Mennonite.

Learn to be kind: *Kristin with children on a field trip to a farm*

Jerry Neufeld Epp

What about the children?

How to survive in a room with 12 little children for 2 1/2 hours without going up in smoke

Mariann Martin

It's a crying shame that you can't get anyone to do childcare these days," says my mother as she puts her hair up at 7 in the morning. Born in a place and time when women didn't have much say about things, Martha Martin certainly has plenty to say about this one thing. She still doesn't seem to think she has a voice in the world, so she settles for rehearsing her mental list of wishes and exasperated complaints to me as I lie in bed while home on vacation.

"It's not 'baby-sitting!'" she lectures. "I hate that word. Baby-sitting is when two adults sit and talk while the kids are left to their own devices. You've got to get down on the floor and do things with them. I've only met a few children I couldn't get happy enough to stay and play."

Childcare is a field in which my mother is an expert. She began teaching Sunday school when Sunday school was a new and controversial concept in her church, she raised nine children of her own and is Grandma to 18 and claimed as Grandma Martha by dozens more. At 72 she is still called by churches in her area when they are having special meetings or caucuses. "Will you do childcare? We can't get anybody to take care of the children," they say.

"I'd like to give a workshop or a talk on childcare," Mother says, "and I don't want to give it to just 10 people in a little room. I want to give it to the whole congregation like anybody who comes back from mission work or any other ministry. The men need to hear it, too.

"I can't believe that in these buildings where they've got kitchens and meeting rooms and every conceivable gadget, they don't have a decent place for the children," she says. "They say, 'Well, you can't have everything.' But I say, You can plan for everything else; it's time you start planning for the children, too."

Bare floor: She goes on to explain what is lacking. "At one conference they put us in a classroom with the desks pushed back, and that was it. Bare floor. No toys. Nothing. I said, 'I want a little adjustable table and small chairs and a piece of carpet on the floor.' Then I had them help me bring in my load of stuff. One man said, 'That was quite a carload.' Another one said, 'I thought it was more than that.'" She laughs, pleased.

For my mother, the church belongs to the children as much as the adults.

"At that meeting they had me doing childcare Saturday night and somebody else doing it on Sunday, so after my time I packed up my stuff. Next day I thought, 'I'll just look in and see how it's going with the children,' and here were these people at their wits end and they still had another hour to go. So I said, 'I'll go to the car and bring you some of my stuff, but in the meantime you can sing a song, do exercises, anything structured.' They hadn't planned a thing." Mother makes a limp little gesture of complete disbelief and moves to the bathroom to finish her hair. She raises her voice to continue to impress upon her sleepy captive audience the importance of planning in advance.

"You have to give them some time to just play, but not the whole time. You have a time where you sit down and have a Bible story, even at 2 or 3 years old they need that. Then you have a craft that they can do, but more important, something they can take home. The conference minister says to me, 'When you do childcare the children don't come out fussy; they always come out happy and ready to show their parents what they've done.'

"One time they said they'd have a girl to help me. She brought a little book to read that took maybe five minutes and that was it. She didn't have anything else. If I hadn't brought along my things

Gordon Houser

"You have to give them some time to just play."
Martha Martin

we'd have gone up in smoke."

Plastic bowls: I know what her "things" entail, I've helped her load them in the car on more than one occasion. She takes tote bags full of Tupperware containers with crayons, paint and paint brushes, tiny scissors, Play-Doh, construction paper and glue with plastic bowls and paint brushes in them. ("Never let a child squeeze a glue bottle. They're watching it come out in such a nice steady stream, they're not seeing how much they're getting. Next thing you know you have a whole puddle of glue." She puts the glue in the bowls, and the children apply it with the cheap brushes.) She carries glitter, patterns to copy, puzzles, blocks, dolls, Popsicle sticks, hole punches shaped like stars, dogs, bunnies, cats and trains. She has storybooks to read as a group, books for children to look at on their own and books with little records that tell the story. Of course, she takes a little record player, too. She constructed a working one out of several disabled ones she bought at thrift stores.

It's an impressive list, but it is a chore to store and haul these supplies around with her. "I don't understand why the conference doesn't have a big box of toys that they keep at their offices so that at every meeting, be it at camp or school or church or wherever, they can just take the box along," she says. "Let the conference provide resources for the children. Why don't they plan for the children?"

Pet peeve: "And why don't they ..." She comes in to stand over me to be sure I hear this pet peeve that I've heard before. "I keep saying this. They need to put a little potty and a little sink right in the room where the children are. You can't send a 3-year-old down the hall to the big bathroom by themselves. They can't open the door by themselves and you can't ask a little child who's just potty-trained to wait until we all can go." One of Mother's tote bags contains a few pairs of clean panties—just in case.

She cleans her glasses and shakes her head. "And why don't people want to take care of the children? They say, 'But I want to hear the speaker.' Well, how do you think I hear the speaker? I get the tape. You don't miss out on everything. And why can't people make some sacrifices for the children?"

She smiles and then reveals one of the perks of the work. "You can learn all kinds of stuff. One little girl told me, 'We had to dig up our yard. Mommie put Pampers in the toilet and it got all plugged up.' Of course, I never told the parents that I knew that," she smiles. "One time I asked the children, 'What did you do this afternoon?' One girl about 5 years old said, 'We watched a video, but you wouldn't have liked it.'" She laughs.

For my mother, the church belongs to the children as much as the adults. For her the world has two groups, "Little People" and "Big People." To her, children are just that—people—full-fledged people already deserving to have their needs taken into consideration. With every institutional decision made, her evaluation includes, "But what about the children? How can any thinking person make a decision without considering the little ones?" Children are not just to be put into a holding pen until they are big enough—big enough to understand, big enough to reach door knobs and water fountains, big enough to be heard, big enough to be included. My mother always sees with the eyes of a children's advocate. Are there toys to play with? Are the facilities safe? Is there food appropriate for small body energy systems. Is there a safe place to play outside? Are windows in children's rooms low enough to see out? Is the floor warm and clean enough to sit on? Does the curriculum take into account that preschoolers can learn about God, too? She sighs. "Why don't people think of these things?"

"Well, Mom," I say, "most people planning buildings have never been alone in a room full of little children for 2 1/2 hours. How are they supposed to know? Your ideas are good. Why don't you tell them to people who can do something about them?"

She gives an expression of disgust. "I'm like my Daddy, I was born 30 years too soon. They wouldn't hear me." She puts on her covering and heads out the door. Today she's helping my sister with her two energetic little boys and 96 cows.

I lie awake now instead of sleeping in, so I jot down all that just transpired. I hope this brings a blessing to all those of my passionate, determined mother's mission field: the children of our congregations.

Mariann Martin teaches at Hesston (Kan.) College.

Be careful what you say

Children raised by parents with positive, affirming attitudes will become caring, self-confident adults.

Jean Guarino

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That reassuring rhyme has been used by generations of parents to comfort children who have been wounded by the taunts of their playmates. But today we know the words expressed in that popular couplet are simply not true.

Words can wound, and permanent damage can be inflicted on a child by thoughtless remarks spoken in anger or jest.

How many times have you and I cringed in a restaurant or store, listening to a red-faced parent berate a child for a glass of spilled milk or some other minor offense? "You clumsy idiot! You can't do anything right." How many times have we lost control ourselves and said words that have wounded our own children?

When words like these are repeated often enough, a son or daughter's sense of self-worth plummets. The child begins to agree with his or her parent's assessment: *I really am dumb.* The child has no sense of his or her own "lovableness," having never experienced unconditional love from a parent. And so, rather than trying to exceed the parent's low expectations, a child who is continually the brunt of denigrating remarks is satisfied to settle for the role of "loser."

"Emotional abuse is an attack on the fulfillment of the child's need to feel and give love, an attack on his or her sense of self-worth," says Dr. Hershel Swinger, director of the Southern California Child Abuse Prevention Training Center in Los Angeles.

"If I call my kid fat, that hurts her. She begins to devalue herself and sees herself negatively. Because she's been hurt by her parents, she expects this hurt from others and feels that if she cares about people they will hurt her. She becomes withdrawn, depressed, or she becomes aggressive. Verbal abuse says to a child, 'You don't deserve love.'"

This kind of emotional maltreatment of children can be divided into two categories:

- **Acts of commission** are blatant instances of abuse, such as harshly belittling and criticizing, ridiculing or shaming the child.
- **Acts of omission or neglect** are more difficult to spotlight but are equally damaging, because they also represent a failure to provide love, nurturing, bonding and security—all the things a child needs for health and happiness.

Such neglect occurs in families of all income levels and from all social classes. It may be present in "gilded ghettos" among children whose parents are too affluent for the child's good. These parents may give the child everything but attention, measuring out what they call "quality time" in dribs and drabs.

It is also widespread among impoverished families or in homes where one or both parents are depressed, ill, preoccupied by financial problems, alcoholic, workaholic or simply inexperienced in raising children.

"In too many homes today the lights are on but no one is there," says Jim Egan, a clinical psychiatrist from Washington. "People are home but not home. Inattentive parents are producing children who seem normal but are not what they should be, what they could have been."

Children, says Egan, are like computers: What goes in is what comes out, but each child gets only one floppy disk. "There is a critical period in the development of every infant: the merry-go-round goes around only once, and the infant does or does not get the brass ring or the full enjoyment of the potential that was his or her birthright."

How can you make sure that your words build up and do not destroy your children?

1. Re-evaluate your priorities: Although stress is necessary to keep us energized and motivated, if you find yourself subject to massive amounts of stress and feel "burnt out," it is time to eliminate some pressures that can cause you to blow a fuse and let hurtful words slip out.

What situations are causing you the most stress? What can you change about them? Can you free yourself from some projects that are not really important to you?

Sit down in a quiet place and make a list of all the things that bother you.

If you can accept yourself in spite of your limitations, while always working to be the best you can, you will be helping your kids value themselves.

Then see if some of these can be eliminated. It's only when we are courageous enough to look within that we can really become aware of the depth of God's love for us and for our children. The Lord's grace is always "on call" for us. All we have to do is ask.

2. Guard your vocabulary: There are some words that members of a family should never say to one another: Stupid, dummy, idiot, worthless, freak and jerk have no place between parents and their children.

Avoid absolute statements, such as "you never" or "you always." Have a sense of good manners with the members of your family.

This doesn't mean you must avoid all conflict or that you can't set limits. Conflict can be handled constructively. When things happen that can set off an explosion, take time out. Wait. Then wait some more. When you hold your tongue until the heat of the moment has passed, it's a lot easier to respond with love rather than anger.

3. Be available: Be willing to stop and share your son's world. He will feel more valuable because of it. Express an interest in what your daughter has done during the day. But don't start interrogating the minute she walks in the door. Wait until you're both relaxed. Instead of probing about her day, why not share your own? Instead of accusing, compliment. Instead of insisting, be silent.

4. Be an active listener: Active listening refers to a kind of listening and response that does not judge, ridicule or command. Instead, when you are listening, try paraphrasing the feelings of your son to help him clarify his own emotions and wants. "You sound pretty angry about that situation." The more we listen without judging, the more we will help our children accept their feelings and improve their ability to deal with them. Listening goes a long way to increasing their willingness to listen to us.

5. Let your kids hear you acknowledge your mistakes: Risk being humble. Dare to say "I'm sorry" to your children when appropriate. Apologizing reveals that the truth is larger than your ego, and that their feelings are more important than your pride.

Acknowledge your shortcomings but also express satisfaction with your strengths; children need to hear your acceptance of your gifts if they are to value their own. If you can accept yourself in spite of your limitations, while always working to be the best you can, you will be helping your kids value themselves.

6. Help your child see God within himself or herself: Inspire your child to be forever God-centered. Foster devout beliefs and practices. Coach by example: Talk about God to your child, put your beliefs into words, participate in worship as a family.

As kids grow in their understanding of God and their realization of his love for them, their own sense of self-worth cannot help but deepen. So will their respect for others.

Children raised by parents with positive, affirming attitudes will become caring, self-confident adults. They will be capable, in turn, of instilling these same attitudes in their own children one day.

Jean Guarino lives in Oak Park, Ill.

What parents can do

Make time for your teen: Find an activity you enjoy doing together and pursue it. If your invitations are declined, keep asking.

Really listen: Because parents have so much to do, we often try to listen while washing dishes or fixing the car. Put your chores aside so your teen knows you're really paying attention.

Take the long view: Don't treat minor mishaps as major catastrophes. Choose the important issues. Don't make your home a battleground.

Tolerate differences: View your teenager as an individual distinct from you. It doesn't mean you can't state your opinion if you disagree.

Let your teens sort things out themselves: Never say you know how your teen feels. They believe their feelings are unique. Never imply that their feelings don't matter or will change. Teens live in the present.

Don't judge: State facts instead of opinions when you praise or criticize. "Your poem made me smile" or, "This report card is all Cs and Ds!" leaves it up to your teen to draw the appropriate conclusion. Teens are sensitive about being judged.

Be generous with praise: Praise efforts, not just accomplishments. And don't comment on the person. "You're a great artist" is hard to live up to. "I loved that drawing" is a fact and comes from your heart.

Set reasonable limits: Teens need them. Your rules should be consistently applied—and rooted in your deepest beliefs and values.

Teach your teen to make sensible decisions: Encourage independence and let your teen make mistakes. Don't step in unless you have to.

From the "Family Survival Guide" portion of Am I Going to Heaven? The Shocking Story of America's Street Kids, *by Sister Mary Rose McGeady (Covenant House, 346 W. 17th St., New York, NY 10011-5002).*

Letters

JESUS THE HEALER

A deep thanks to you at *The Mennonite* for printing a report on the "Dancing at the Table: Reimagining the Church" conference (Aug. 13 issue). I want to add a bit of my personal experience.

I met Jesus the Healer again this summer. I was profoundly blessed by being a part of this conference, which took place at Manchester College during the last weekend of June for all Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations and individuals who are seeking a place of welcome for gay, lesbian and bisexual Christians.

I grew up as the daughter of a gay father, knowing too well my church's contempt for anyone who isn't straight. While I have received understanding, comfort and encouragement from individuals within the church, I have needed the larger Mennonite body to welcome me, my family and our many homosexual and bisexual sisters and brothers to Christ's Table.

Each time the nearly 300 of us gathered for worship at the conference, I looked through tear-filled eyes, marveling at the movement of the Holy Spirit in the dancing, the songs of praise, the telling of stories, the drama of Scripture, the lamenting and the celebrating. The weekend empowered me to return to my congregation and to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary with a spirit of hope instead of fear. I am strengthened to affirm that God has called me, a gay man's daughter (and much more), to the vital work of the kingdom. I long for the day when I can study and pastor alongside my homosexual and bisexual sisters and brothers.

I write especially for those who, like me, have been disheartened by the violence abounding in our congregations, conferences and between individuals. I write to break the power of the silence and the words that stab and kill our spirits. May all of us who believe in the grace-giving, forgiving and healing Christ come to the Table by God's invitation to commune and feast. *Teresa Dutchersmith, Elkhart, Ind.*

THE REST OF THE STORY

Your July 23 issue of *The Mennonite* accurately reports paragraphs one and three of a news release from the Indiana-Michigan Conference offices, "Disciplinary Process with John Howard Yoder Draws to a Close."

I believe readers of *The Mennonite* should also know what the other three paragraphs said, namely:

"In the fall of 1992 the Church Life Commission (CLC) of the Indiana-Michigan Conference appointed an accountability and support group (ASG). This group met more than 30 times with Yoder and his wife, Annie. These meetings were 'marked by openness, mutual acceptance, respect, confrontation and, we believe, growing trust,' according to reports from the ASG. They report further that Yoder has stated clearly that he is committed to not cross appropriate [sic] sexual boundaries in his future relationships with women.

"The ASG final report stated that Yoder made sufficient changes in attitudes, beliefs and behaviors to bring closure to the process. They also report that Yoder has gained greater awareness of and appreciation for the complexity and importance of forgiveness in the faith community. The Church Life Commission commends Yoder for participating in this process to its conclusion.

"While recommending the continuing use of an accountability plan, the CLC and the Indiana-Michigan Conference encourage Yoder and the church to use his gifts of writing and teaching."

In your abbreviated use of the material sent to you, readers get the impression that the painful four-year disciplinary process ended in failure. The omitted paragraphs, quoted above, indicate that this was not the case but that in fact, in view of changes made, both Yoder and the church are now encouraged "to use his gifts of writing and teaching," opening the way to our hearing him and learning with him again. The imposed silence has been ended. Since Yoder has not been serving as a congregational pastor, he agreed that his ministerial credentials need not be reinstated. I remember that he was reluctant to accept ordination in the first place, but members of the seminary faculty encouraged him to do so. *Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind.*

HOW WE LABEL OURSELVES

John Longhurst's exploration of the way our congregations and institutions see the "Mennonite" label (July 23 issue, page 3) might have been more helpful to all of us if he had explained the etymology of this word. The reformers of 1525 were immediately known by their critics, most likely in a pejorative way, as Anabaptists ("those who baptize again").

Whether the followers of Menno some decades later then also received their identity in a climate of condemnation and/or disparagement is not as clear. Evolution and confusion continue—in one sense, Menno Simons isn't even the founder of our denomination. Today we can buy Mennonite furniture, enjoy Old Order baking and ride in Amish buggies. Insiders speak a language even more esoteric: "Paraguayers" are a certain part of our family tree; "Markhamers" and "David Martins" are code words for others. Many different groups, of course, also have their surname-based labels: the Calvinists, the Lutherans, the Hutterites, the Franciscans.

Our search for new and meaningful descriptors is not so much an attempt to unload old baggage, as it is an effort to present ourselves to our neighbors with real integrity and openness. The spirit of Christian ecumenism is surely also inspiring some of the experimentation; these trends I endorse.

One caution: The English language, more than any other, resists attempts by authority figures, be they institutions or power individuals, to impose and regulate new vocabulary. (Conference integration committees take note.) Labels that are accepted "in the marketplace" become part of our vernacular; there simply is no other mechanism.

My recommendation for our denomination? The "Believers' Church" label is coming into increasing usage, and there's a kind of roominess to it, which will help us be much more inclusive in the future. On the other hand, how arrogant of us to designate ourselves as the only ones who believe! *Karl Dick, Waterloo, Ont.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

Profile

'As long as God gives me the strength'

78-year-old Evelyn Lambert reaches out to Old Colony Mennonites

Chris Huebert Stauffer

At Evelyn Lambert's age, most church workers would have completed their ministry, passed the baton to others and settled down to take it easy for their remaining years. But this rural Kismet, Kan., resident's outreach to Old Colony Mennonite families migrating from Mexico is just now hitting the high-water mark.

Evelyn, 78, was one of the founders of the Et Cetera Shop in Liberal, Kan., in 1978 and helped manage it for eight years. The shop sells Self-Help Crafts of the World items and secondhand clothes to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee. Over the years, she and her husband, Harold, who died in June 1995, have taken in 22 foster children. With such a full life, no one could have faulted her had she decided her days of active service were over.

But God called Evelyn to a new ministry. "As long as God gives me the strength and wants me to do this, I'll do it," she says. "I get pretty tired sometimes, but I enjoy it."

One beneficiary of Evelyn's efforts is her church, Calvary Mennonite in Liberal. While the small church may have 30 to 40 adults attend on a Sunday, the children's Sunday school is bursting at the seams. As many as 27 children, mostly Old Colony, show up regularly.

The Lamberts first began reaching out to Old Colony Mennonites about 20 years ago, when people from this group began passing through the Liberal area and working as migrant laborers on nearby farms. Through their contacts with Old Colony Mennonites, the Lamberts began to understand more about their culture and strong group identification.

In recent years, as economic conditions soured in Mexico and the colonies there, Mennonite families began arriving in Kansas to settle. Many of them are poor, with little education, and spiritually uncertain after being separated from the community that had previously defined their faith.

Meanwhile, Calvary was down to two children in Sunday school. The Lamberts saw an opportunity to minister to the Old Colonists' spiritual needs and at the same time revitalize their church's Sunday school.

Calvary was initially reluctant to get involved, so the Lamberts continued on their own initiative—and their own expense.

Jesus and the Bible: With no church of their own, Old Colonists only meet every few weeks when a traveling Old Colony minister comes through. There is no children's Sunday school, so children were and are the main focus of the Lamberts' outreach. As they became acquainted with the families, the Lamberts would suggest that the children attend Sunday school to learn about Jesus and the Bible.

Miriam Huebert Stauffer (MCC)

Evelyn used every opportunity she had to meet new families, using whatever excuses she could find to visit. "Some families said they would send their kids to Sunday school when they know English, so we said we'd have translators," she said. "We did, but they weren't needed for long because the kids learned English so quickly." Harold and Evelyn themselves picked up all the children each Sunday and took them to church. Today, others help out, as 20-plus children won't fit into one car.

Evelyn's devotion to the children has extended beyond Sunday mornings, as she plans numerous special events for them, including birthday parties, games and Easter egg hunts. Once she brought 12 of the older children to the Et Cetera Shop to help sort and hang clothes for a day. "For those children it was an introduction to volunteer work, to mission; they knew they were helping other people, and they didn't want to go home," says Ervey Unruh, pastor at Calvary.

On the third Sunday that a child is in Sunday school, he or she gets a Bible; before this, none of them have ever had one, Evelyn says. "They are so thrilled, they bring them every morning once they have them. They soak up verses like sponges."

Over time, Calvary has come to support Evelyn's ministry and now is solidly behind it. "When you have someone excited about something, and making it work, that gets others on board," says pastor Unruh. "Evelyn was presented with something she feels God is calling her to do—that's a ministry," he says.

"As long as God gives me the strength and wants me to do this, I'll do it. I get pretty tired sometimes, but I enjoy it."

Evelyn Lambert

Do you know inspiring stories of people to share with our readers?

Contact us at
(316) 283-5100,
fax (316) 283-0454,
e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org

Let's have diversity on our boards

We need to include women and non-Anglos.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

A shareholder of Cypress Semiconductor Corp. recently suggested in a letter to T. J. Rodgers, the chief executive officer of Cypress, that he consider putting qualified women and non-Anglos on his board.

The suggestion of including qualified women and non-Anglos on corporate boards is one many corporations are receiving and acting on. But Mr. Rodgers did not take kindly to the suggestion. It so happened that the shareholder making the suggestion was a Catholic nun, Sr. Doris Gormley of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. When Mr. Rodgers received the letter, he didn't do the polite or expected thing—thanking her for her suggestion. Instead he wrote a six-page letter, which he sent to all Cypress shareholders, telling her to "get down from your moral high horse. ... Choosing a board of directors based on race and gender is a lousy way to run a company. Cypress will never do it."

Mr. Rodgers went on to say, "Bluntly stated, a 'woman's view' on how to run our semiconductor company does not help us, unless that woman has an advanced technical degree and experience as a CEO."

Apparently few women or non-Anglos fit his guidelines. A search for a director with the right qualifications, he wrote, "usually yields a male who is 50-plus years old."

Mr. Rodgers now reports that he has received over 600 letters as a result of his letter, and most of them support his position. I suspect most of the letters of support come from white males over 50 years old.

I don't agree with Mr. Rodgers' position, but I appreciate his honesty and his ability to focus on the issue of diversity at the board of directors level. My experience tells me that a board made up of a wide range of people is going to serve its stakeholders (stockholders, customers and community) much more effectively than one made up of white men over the age of 50. Robert H. Campbell, CEO of Sunoco, said recently, "Often, what a woman or minority person can bring to the board is some perspective a company hasn't had before—adding some modern-day reality to the deliberation process. Those perspectives are of great value and often missing from all-white male gatherings. They can also be inspirational to the company's diverse work force."

Mr. Campbell says it well. A diverse board provides for various views to be heard, and it speaks volumes to the company's employees.

Church boards: As I observe many church boards, I think much of the church has done better at diversity (at least with women) than corporate America has. A review of the makeup of the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the various commissions shows that one-third or more are women.

Closer to home, at the community and congregational level, whether the boards have diverse membership seems to be a community or congregational issue. Some have many women active in their board work; others have few, if any. But here, too, the words of Mr. Campbell need to be heard: "What a woman or minority person can bring to the board is some perspective a company hasn't had before."

I have heard, "But we just can't find qualified people." My answer: "How hard and where have you looked?"

Board members are often suggested or nominated by other board members, resulting in perpetuating board members that look and act like their colleagues. If there is no conscious effort by existing board members to include diversity at the board level, then no woman or non-Anglo will naturally be included. There needs to be a conscious decision to talk about and work at diversity.

Saying qualified people cannot be found is often code for, "We don't want anyone who doesn't fit our existing model." And our demands of qualified women and non-Anglos are often unreasonable.

When I accepted my first board assignment, I was not an experienced board person and hardly qualified. Yet others were willing to take a chance with me and mentor me in what it takes to be a good board member. Without that first chance and mentoring, I probably would not have been asked to serve on other boards. As church, community and corporate boards work at diversity, they need to give people a chance and not expect them to immediately contribute at the level of the most experienced board members.

I have little patience for the excuse that qualified women or non-Anglos can't be found. I remember all too well sitting at a bank board table. To my right was a board member who slept through most of the meeting. His unlit cigar sometimes fell from his mouth. His nurse would reach down, pick it up, and place it back in his mouth as he continued sleeping. This man was hardly a qualified board member, yet no one was willing to ask for his resignation. He eventually passed away and the problem was solved.

There are women and non-Anglos qualified to serve on our boards. We need to find them and invite them to join us at the table. Margaret Bush Wilson, former chair of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, notes that when she was invited to serve on the board of Monsanto, she had a limited knowledge of the chemical industry. But "as a woman of African descent, it was my experience in the law, in government and civil rights that Monsanto sought in order to have a broad range of competence and experience on its board."

We, too, will serve our people better if we bring that same diversity to the boards of our corporations, our community organizations and our congregations.

THE Mennonite

September 10, 1996

WINDOW TO MISSION

Communion, Baptism, Foot Washing

Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive...honor and glory and blessing! Rev. 5:12

CONTENTS

3 **On re-enacting Christ's life**
by Diane Zaerr

5 **Baptism: part of my journey**
by Laura Wiebe-Powell

7 **An act of simplicity**
by Janice Yordy Sutter

9 **Journey thoughts**
by Bek Linsenmeyer

10 **A Mennonite Perspective**
by Gilberto Flores
translated by Violeta Ajquejay

11 **Celebrating the Lord**
by Ken Hawkley

12 **Foot washing: building our spiritual family**
by Ofelia Garcia de Pedroza
translated by Laverne Rutschman

13 **Resources for you**

14 **Roundtable**
by Susan Jantzen

15 **Facts and figures**
by Susan Jantzen

16 **Window shopping**

Cover photo credit: Peace Chinese Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C.

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

On re-enacting Christ's life

by Diane Zaerr

Recently at a Catholic wedding I thought about the wide variety of rituals and symbols available to the worship planner in the Catholic tradition. The priest's vestments and the bride and groom radiant beside the priests serving the cup to their guests created a rich tapestry of blessing to begin this marriage. Of course, non-Catholics were not encouraged to receive Communion and I keenly felt the exclusion.

Mennonites have rich signs and symbols from our tradition as well, unique in some ways, but nonetheless ours. Because we have fewer visual symbols than some denominations, we need to make the most of the symbols we do have, engaging all the senses. Rituals mark our way in life. In an era where only the "new and improved" gets air time, we need ritual to remember who we are, where we've come from, where we're going.

Religious News Service photo

Baptism, the Lord's Supper and foot washing are three rich symbols that can create meaningful worship experiences. They can connect modern Mennonites with our roots, help us establish our identity now and send us with confident hope into the future.

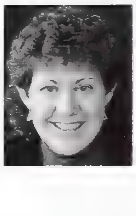
At First Mennonite Church in Iowa City, we returned our baptismal services to Sunday morning because we want the whole community, particularly our children, to participate and note just how we formally welcome people as members of our community. Although we enjoyed the creative worship permitted when we had the whole Sunday evening service for baptisms, our congregation is spread out geographically and we get lower attendance for services other than Sunday morning. We realized many of our children could go for several years without witnessing a baptism. In May, our baptism Sunday coincided with the day Venture Club was leading worship. We crowded the four candidates, their parents and mentors up onto the platform so they could be seen. I asked Jeff, one of the candidates, if he had a preference if we knelt for baptism on the floor or on the platform. He replied, "Well, this is a pretty important thing we're doing here and people will want to see us make this step." The faces of the third through eighth grade Venture Club kids on the front rows verified Jeff's understanding of his peers.

Anabaptists have always been interested in "re-enacting" Christ's life, in getting back to the way the early church lived, or as close as is practicable. We have a detailed account of how Jesus led the Lord's Supper ritual, as well as direct teaching that he wanted his followers to use this sign to remember his deliverance and to celebrate fellowship. The Christian church has faithfully observed Communion, though the form and frequency have varied. Experiencing another form of Communion might make our own patterns all the richer.

In seminary all senior students are urged to lead a chapel. When the pressure came my way, I combined a class project with the chapel assignment and led the group in an Eastern Orthodox Communion service. The windows were covered to darken the chapel. The chairs were pushed aside so people could move about as people do in the Orthodox tradition. Incense lent its distinctive odor. All were invited to light a candle as they came into the space and place it in the box of sand on the front table. Despite the candles becoming a blaze and demanding the attention of the grounds supervisor, people seemed to appreciate the opportunity to be in touch with other Christians, very different from us. Of course, in a real Eastern Orthodox service a woman priest could not have presided, and we non-Orthodox students, staff and faculty could not have participated. But the new space and arrangements, incense and hauntingly beautiful music such as "The Great Prokeimenon," (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* 62) allowed us a new experience. After coming forward to receive Communion by intinction, where the bread is dipped in the juice and fed to one with the words "the body and blood of Christ, given for you," people did not return to their seats. (I thought I must not have planned for traffic flow very well.) They said it felt like community gathered there. No one wanted to end the moment. And so they waited in a comfortable silence until all had been served.

Foot washing is another act we have recorded in detail, modeled by Jesus himself. Some of our newer members in Iowa City from non-Mennonite backgrounds have more interest in foot washing than some who grew up with it. And they also note inconsistencies in the servanthood being symbolized and the life lived outside of the church. A small group of folks at our church enjoyed foot washing last year led by a group of Brethren at a Maundy Thursday love feast.

Baptism, Communion and foot washing—events rich with meaning. May we gather up our signs and symbols for worship, enhance and refurbish them until they glow with the Spirit's light, helping Christians and not-yet-believers alike "repent and turn toward God in faith" (*Confession of Faith*, Article 11).



Diane Zaerr is co-pastor of First Mennonite Church, Iowa City, Iowa. She lives with her cat, Blanche, and gardens "for health and wholeness."

Baptism: part of my journey

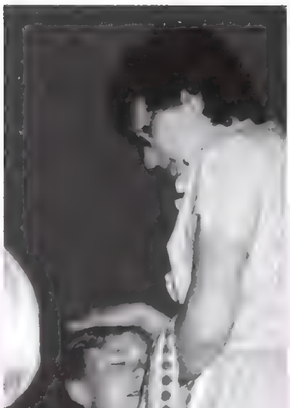
by Laura Wiebe-Powell

"I baptize you in the name of God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, Sustainer." Rev. Jean Henricks said these words as she sprinkled water on my head in spring 1990 at Lawrence (Kan.) Mennonite Fellowship. Our first son, Jordan, not quite 1 year old, looked on from his dad's arms. My husband Wendell and I were in seminary together at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo.

My faith journey growing up had exposed me to different denominations. We were raised in the Methodist church, where I was baptized as an infant along with my identical twin sister. My parents wanted us to experience worship at Catholic and Episcopal Christmas Eve services. They also held ecumenical study groups in our home to come up with creative, peaceful solutions to the social climate of the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. I was only indirectly exposed to the Anabaptist tradition through my mother's Mennonite relatives. After college I began attending a Mennonite church in Newton, Kan., and was quickly convinced that I had found my church home.

My decision to be rebaptized into the church in Lawrence was part of a larger journey of accepting a "call" to pastoral ministry. This was a long process of a lot of busy signals, not always a direct line. My rebaptism was a sign of my faith commitment, which I compare to a wedding. It was a personal commitment, a way for the congregation to support me and a way for me to join the church. I completed part of my degree at St. Paul School of Theology and am finishing the rest of the degree through Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Great Plains Seminary. Being committed to a particular church has been helpful in supporting and discerning my gifts for ministry. The fact that I could read a faith statement, request that the language be more inclusive, and have a woman pastor baptize me made it all the more meaningful.

For me this was an easy, nonthreatening decision. My decision was not fraught with the same kind of dangers as those of our 16th-century Anabaptist forebears. At that time baptism was a census-taking method, both in the Catholic and Protestant churches. Because political and religious institutions were so closely allied, baptism was a way of keeping track of all people—rich and poor, rural and town. Nowhere in Scripture could the early Anabaptists find anything written that encouraged making a decision for baptism without knowledge, experience and understanding of what walking with Jesus meant. An infant would not be able to make this decision. When those first Anabaptists started to rebaptize each other they knew they were risking their lives. This act was considered treasonous before church and state. Refusing to baptize infants was a threat to the existing powers. By choosing adult baptism these people identified their allegiance to a new church, separated from the state, choosing not to fight in state wars and called to be God's people, even if that meant risking martyrdom.



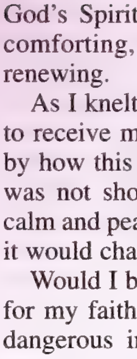
COM

The early Anabaptists also spoke of three levels of baptism: of the Spirit, water and blood. Baptism of the Spirit is the inward working of God's Spirit in our lives. The baptism of water is an outward sign of willingness to publicly and formally state one's commitment to follow Jesus and to give and receive counsel in the church. The baptism of blood is a willingness to suffer for one's faith; to complete the sufferings of Christ, even to suffer death as Jesus did.

How is it that I experience these three levels of baptism today? I can testify to the working of God's Spirit in my life. At those moments of great trauma and sorrow God has whispered, "Choose life." God's Spirit moves with us, helping, comforting, challenging, changing, renewing.

As I knelt in the front of the church to receive my rebaptism, I was struck by how this was a watershed event. It was not showy or extravagant, but a calm and peaceful moment. Yet I knew it would change my life forever.

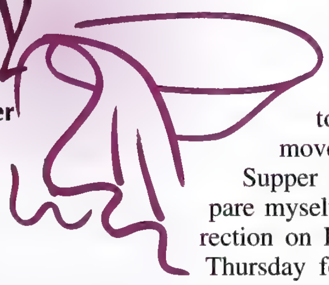
Would I be willing to suffer and die for my faith? In what way is baptism dangerous in our culture? These are questions I will continue to wrestle with in my own life and to raise in pastoral ministry.



Laura Wiebe-Powell is co-pastor of Mennonite Church of the Servant in Wichita, Kan. She and her husband Wendell have two sons.

An act of simplicity

by Janice Yordy Sutter



Our feet are not dusty from long journeys in sandals. We appreciate the luxury of cars and daily showers and clean socks and shoes. When I'm planning our annual Holy Week foot washing service, I pause and wonder about this simple act. It seems so foreign to our fast-paced life.

Why wash one another's feet on the Thursday before Easter? Is this just a strange old custom that we've lifted out of a Bible story? Or is it, indeed, "a meaningful symbol of service and love for each other" (*Confession of Faith*, Article 13).

I grew up in a congregation that practiced foot washing (and sometimes hand washing) once a year on Maundy Thursday. It was a regular part of our Holy Week observance. That evening's worship always included the Lord's Supper, singing, Scripture reading and foot washing. Although the format varied, I found Maundy Thursday worship to be a meaningful way to move into the drama of the Last Supper and Good Friday and to prepare myself for the celebration of resurrection on Easter morning. The Maundy Thursday foot washing service became, for me, one of the most meaningful worship services of the church year.

The three congregations I have served as pastor have also had an annual foot washing service and Communion on the Thursday before Easter. I'm glad for this. But I've continued to ask what is important about this worship ritual and how can we help people experience it as "a meaningful symbol of service and love for each other." How can we see this simple act as a way to show our commitment to imitate Christ in loving and serving others?

For the past few years our congregation has worshiped together on Maundy Thursday evening at round tables in our darkened fellowship hall. An oil lamp on each table provides light. Also waiting is a tureen of vegetable beef soup, an unsliced loaf of bread, a plate of grapes and a pitcher of grape juice. After singing a simple song and giving thanks for the meal, we serve each other and eat together. This is a time to visit with each other and enjoy fellowship around the tables.

Toward the end of the meal we quiet ourselves to listen to Scripture. A few people stand and read selected passages from Psalm 36, Psalm 133 and 1 Corinthians 12. We then enter into a time of preparation for the Lord's Supper through silence and corporate prayer.

After hearing the words of remembrance of Christ's last meal with his disciples from 1 Corinthians 11 or Luke 22, we pray together and then pass what remains of the loaf of bread we've already broken together. We eat it in silence. In the same way, after a prayer, we serve one another cups of juice, remembering Christ.

After we have shared the bread and the cup, we sing a song, such as "Jesus, remember me" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* 247). We listen to the story of Jesus' great love for his disciples, found in John 13. I then invite people to participate in foot washing. Those who prefer not to wash feet serve by clearing the tables and beginning to wash the dishes.

Five basins of warm water and stacks of white towels are provided outside of the circle of tables in curtained off areas of the fellowship hall. There is a single chair in front of each basin. These foot washing areas are lit by candlelight and lanterns.

As individuals are ready, they ask someone else to wash feet with them. Sometimes husbands and wives wash feet together, sometimes parent and child, sometimes friends, sometimes acquaintances. The elders and pastors are watchful to see that everyone who wishes has a partner and that no one is left out.

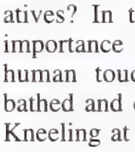
Each pair goes to one of the basins. After removing their own socks and shoes, one kneels down on the floor to wash the feet of the other. It is a simple act: to lovingly scoop soothing water over another's feet, then to dry them. The partners change places. The one who was seated now washes the other's feet. After foot washing, the partners may hug or exchange a holy kiss. After putting on socks and shoes, they return to the larger group. During foot washing, hymns are quietly sung or played.

The evening's worship closes with a corporate prayer, the reading of a Psalm of praise (such as 103) and a song of blessing and sending.

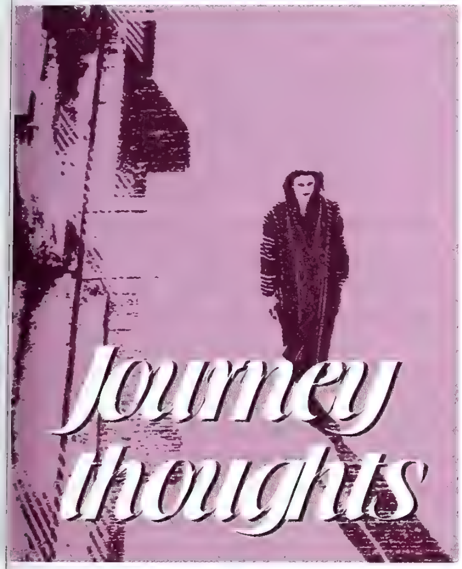
Although foot washing may seem like an awkward and unusual practice at first glance, I have found it to be a symbol of meaning in my Christian life. Sometimes I have washed feet with people who are very significant in my life. I remember washing feet with my friend and sister in Christ who also was the nurse who assisted as I delivered Benjamin and Brian. Then, foot washing was a tender time of serving one who had served me.

Sometimes I have washed feet with people whom I know less well. This symbol reminds me that Jesus calls us to serve with love those who are in need, whether we know them well or not.

Foot washing acknowledges our need for loving human touch. Who of us has cared for elderly parents or relatives? In that setting we know the importance of serving with a loving, human touch. Who among us has bathed and cared for young children? Kneeling at the tub and washing little ones is another form of this loving act, as is sponging down someone who has a fever. When seen in the light of these more routine acts of loving, caring and touching, foot washing is yet another way to serve and love others in the manner of Jesus Christ. It can become "one way of representing Christ to each other in acts of hospitality, service and love."



Janice Yordy Sutter is a pastor at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind., along with her husband Dave Sutter, and Andre Gingerich Stoner. She is the mother of two young sons.



"Our own age does not, on the whole, take Christian baptism very seriously," states John Oyer in *Anabaptist Baptism*. I am troubled by this statement. As I have been examining the *Confession of Faith*, I have been reminded of our Anabaptist history. Is Oyer right? Have we come to take casually this act of faith for which our forebears died?

Our desire as a WM Publications Committee is to hold the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* before you for this year, believing it to be a significant agreement between the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, and an important document of our faith history. Parts of that Confession are the Articles on baptism, the Lord's Supper and foot washing (11, 12 and 13). We have asked our writers to share out of their experiences of these acts believing that these are meaningful acts in our communities of faith.

When we attend a baptism or participate in the Lord's Supper or foot washing we are called to examine our own lives. I have heard elderly people talk about the Saturday night before Communion being a time of quiet reflection. Is this your experience? Is this preparation still encouraged?

These are specific acts about which our Lord instructed us. How are we honoring the Lord by our practices today? Our writers for this issue speak of these acts as times of rejoicing, reconciliation, sacrifice and holiness. I am thankful for our writers who share of these times, who have been gracious in sharing about experiences precious in their faith journeys. I pray that you will be called to reflection and action as you read.

I talked to my 81-year-old mother about her baptism. I never knew she was baptized in the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. After telling her story, one of her comments was "I had not thought about some of those things for years." And she was thankful for our talk that brought back the memory of a joyful time.

In telling those stories we are reminded of our promises and commitments—to our Lord and to his body. As we participate we can examine how our life is measuring up to our ideals. It can also be a means to teach our children and our grandchildren about our deeply held beliefs. Words from Deuteronomy, "talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (6:7), are still good words for our lives.

Bek Linsenmeyer is editor for WM, working one-third time in the Newton office. She and her husband Dean have two teenagers.

A Mennonite perspective

by Gilberto Flores, translated by Violeta Ajquejay

The *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* combines many of the learnings of the Anabaptists through their pilgrimage. I am impressed with the theology related to important doctrines, such as Article 2 on Jesus Christ, especially the three ways that the offices of Christ are presented and the inclusion of nonviolence as part of his ministry, strongly expressed in the moment of his pain and suffering.

Gilberto Flores has been appointed director of Hispanic ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries. He and his family moved to Newton in July.

The Confession also addresses the concept of the church, God's people, called to be a sign of a new society. I am committed to a church that has the vision of being a community of disciples, a church that can be an alternative for a fallen human society, a missionary church that shares its resources to proclaim God's kingdom. A church that serves—inspired by God's love.

Baptism is a sign of the cleanness and liberation that God gives us through the Holy Spirit. It is an external demonstration of our repentance and the desire to turn from disobedience to be dedicated to the Lord's service. It is a committed demonstration to follow Jesus Christ with integrity.

I am the sixth child of a pastoral family. Of course, it is not always an advantage to be a pastor's son. I was 13 when I was baptized. When I was 16, I met Pastor Quintanilla, who challenged me to think about a life more committed to God. He encouraged me to give my best to God. At age 18, while still a student, I was invited to preach for two weeks in a small congregation. I resisted but the congregation did not give up until I said yes. This was the way I began to experience the joy and pain that ministry involves.

My wife Rosa Elena and I are involved in the social reality in Central America, the struggle for a more just society. We have experienced persecution and death threats at the hands of the authorities. Our association with Mennonites, who work for life and righteousness and justice, helped us to affirm our valuable faith and doctrinal identity. Our involvement as Anabaptists made us realize that we were in the correct path of life and faith.

WM support aids in the development of Hispanic ministries through CHM.

Celebrating the Lord

by Ken Hawkley

Communion has tended to be a solemn affair in my experience, where the death of Jesus Christ is commemorated. It is a time to remember the sacrifice Jesus made and to realign ourselves with the seriousness of the commitment we have made in light of that sacrifice. This has been very important to my faith formation and essential to my understanding of certain aspects of Christianity.

But at a conference to discuss the central and essential nature and meaning of the Lord's Supper, God broke through in a new way in my life. During that 1995 conference at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, we experienced Communion around several themes such as healing and reconciliation.

The last Communion was a celebration. The table was set with different kinds of breads and sparkling grape juice. We gathered around the table for reading of Scripture, prayer and singing. At one point we all joined hands in a circle around the table and marched as we sang.

We also listened to Scripture describing the feast that the Lord will prepare for us (Isaiah 25:6-10, Luke 14:16-24), and of the adoration of Christ when he returns (Revelation 4:8-11, 5:6-13, 19:6-9). The hymns were ones of celebration: "All hail the power of Jesus name" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* 106), and "At the Lamb's high feast" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* 262).

After the traditional words of institution were spoken, everyone was invited to the feast table to take the bread and the juice. We were encouraged to serve one another, so that each person could experience being welcomed to Christ's feast. We sampled as many types of bread as we wished while moving around the table, greeting and conversing with others. It was an active participation in the Lord's feast as well as in the community of faith.

The festive atmosphere reminded me of the joy we will experience when God's purpose is fulfilled and Christ returns again. The many types of bread reminded me of the universal Word that God has given. At the feast in heaven, all the nations will be represented around the table. Being encouraged to mingle was a reminder that I am engaged in the community of faith. What better time to talk with others in the community than around the Lord's table, when Christ is celebrated?

This was an unusual and deeply moving Communion. The joy and celebration helped me remember the love and grace God offers. I could find room to rejoice that the Lamb has

Continued on page 16

Ken Hawkley is director of adult/young adult education for the Commission on Education. Ken, his wife Louise and their two children live in Powell, Ohio.

WM funds support COE's development of resources. For an example of this service, contact Ken Hawkley, 8274 Waco Lane, Powell OH 43065.

Foot washing: building our spiritual family

by Ofelia Garcia de Pedroza, translated by Laverne Rutschman

Foot washing is not a sacrament but an ordinance Jesus gave as an example of humility and of a loving disposition to serve others. He teaches this in the context of Luke 22:24-27, where the one who desires to be first must be a servant. This is an act that transcends one's position of leadership within the church, whether it be that of pastor, elder, deacon, organization leader, man or woman, adult or child.

Jesus, our Master and Lord, taught us humility in John 13:1-20. His humility confronts me in my spiritual life. Am I obedient to the teaching of Jesus? Am I consistent with the love that I say I have and my responses to my neighbors' needs?

Foot washing is not very common in our Mexican churches. However, when it is observed, it brings about a renewed dedication to the body of Christ as we give ourselves to serve others. It is accompanied by reconciliation and acceptance.

On some occasions foot washing has been accompanied with tears that seem to pour forth from the depth of the heart. This has not only been true for the person that was serving, but also for the one who was being served. It is beautiful to observe those who take part. It enriches our fellowship by deepening our identity as a spiritual family.

Ofelia Garcia de Pedroza, Committee for Anabaptist Mission worker in Mexico City, leads in prayer at the Coycacan Church.

In the church that my husband and I pastored in Puebla, foot washing was observed each year during Holy Week. We also acknowledged, in a foot washing service, the sacrificial work carried out among our indigenous people by North American missionaries. We celebrated in a foot washing service the work of a Tzeltal Indian couple from Chiapas who were true apostles of the gospel to the poor and forgotten ones. On another occasion a foot washing service was carried out to recognize two representatives from our sister church, the Franconia Mennonite Meetinghouse of Souderton, Pa., because of their love, interest and generosity toward the church in Puebla. The community consensus was: We are here, honoring you and wanting to relate to you in a way that is responsive to what you have done.

The Puebla Church practices foot washing without distinction between women and men, adults and children. I

Continued on page 16

Your giving to WM helps support the Commission on Overseas Mission's church planting ministry in Mexico City.

Resources *for you*

- *A Community of Memory: My Days with George and Clara* by Jeff Gundy (University of Illinois Press, 1996, paperback, $14.95 U.S.). Jeff Gundy's creative nonfiction brings us a series of narratives about his Mennonite and Amish forebears. You will want to hear these stories, beginning with John Strubhar in 1837 down through Clara Gundy who died in 1979.
- *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss* by Gerald L. Sittser (Zondervan, 1996, hardback, $12.99 U.S.). Sooner or later all people suffer loss. Loss is as much a part of normal life as birth, for as surely as we are born into this world we suffer loss before we leave it. This book shows how it is possible to live in and be enlarged by loss. "This is the single most reflective and redemptive book on sorrow and loss that I have ever read."—Bill Hybels, pastor, Willow Creek Community Church.
- *Aging: The Fulfillment of Life* by Henri J.M. Nouwen and Walter J. Gaffney (Doubleday, 1990, paperback, $9.95 U.S.). Enhanced by some 85 photos, this book shows how to make the later years a source of hope rather than a time of loneliness, a way out of darkness into the light.
- *Bound to Forgive: The Pilgrimage to Reconciliation of a Beruit Hostage* by Lawrence Martin Jenco, O.S.M. (Ave Maria Press, 1995, paperback, $9.95 U.S.). "Learning to forgive is a life and death matter for each of us. What Father Jenco discovered during his ordeal as a captive sheds light on basic moral choices in ordinary life—from what we do with damaged relationships to suffering loss and finally, facing death ourselves."—Jim Forest, author of *Making Friends of Enemies.*
- *Visual Arts Wichita '95: An exhibition of works of art on the occasion of the joint conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30, 1995* (Mennonite Press, 1995, paperback, $4 U.S.). Both a wonderful remembrance of Wichita '95 and an excellent photographic testimony to the wealth of artistic talent among Mennonites.

For groups involved with material aid projects, the following Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) videos provide useful information and will also affirm the value of your service.

- *No hands but ours*. This 13-minute video follows the chain of hands that provide MCC material aid resources, such as school kits and comforters, to those who receive material aid (Bosnia and Rwandan refugees in Zaire).
- *Rwanda: Where is the hope?* This 18-minute video follows a team of Zairian Mennonites and MCC workers assisting Rwandan refugees in Zaire. Recounts stories of hope in the midst of suffering.
- *School kits.* A 15-minute video presents a lively, fun look at North American children preparing school kits and Nicaraguan children receiving them.

All books available through Faith & Life Bookstore: 1-800-743-2484. All videos available from: MCC, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron PA 17501-0500; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg MB R3T 5K9; or from your local MCC office.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator, lives in Newton and works one-half time for WM. She and her husband, Jim, have two sons in grade school. They are members of New Creation Fellowship.

Pacific Southwest Mennonite Women

Pang Moua Vang, May Xiong Lee and Phoua Yang shared at the Pacific Southwest Mennonite women's breakfast meeting during the regional conference June 22. They are starting women's groups for Christian support among the Hmong churches in Fresno. Let's join them in prayer as they begin!

While meeting with Pacific Southwest Mennonite Women's executive, I learned that the three vice presidents (representing three regions) each plan a retreat in their own region and they are also funded to attend the retreat of another region. This provides important renewal and builds relationships in a different region. Good idea, Shelagh, Linda, Joyce, Joylyn and Louise!

General Conference Women in Mission Election Results

Thank you to all groups who returned ballots! We have elected new GCWM executive committee members:

Liz Klassen, GCWM President
"Women in Mission is entering a time of significant change. My hope and prayer is that we support each other and share our talents, gifts and blessings as God has taught us to do."

Louise Auernheimer, GCWM Secretary
"Mennonite women, as servants of the gospel, have an enormous privilege/task/opportunity/challenge to share the good news in addition to encouraging and mentoring each other in our faith pilgrimage."

Candi Dietterich, a new appointee to the Publications Committee
"I'm looking forward to joining the Publications Committee, using my profes-

Facts & figures

February—June	1995	1996
United States (in U.S. dollars)	$33,304.87	$35,816.45
Canada (in Canadian dollars)	23,063.25	13,833.27
Percent of GCWM budget reached	26.1%	23.9%

YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Your prayers and financial gifts strengthen the church so that together we can be God's people in our world. Please continue to support WM with both your prayers and your gifts so that we can enter integration on firm footing.

Thank you

sional skills for the General Conference. This is an especially exciting time in the conference—one of change and growth. I'm anxious to form new friendships across the country with other Mennonites working toward a common goal."

Liz Klassen

Louise Auernheimer

Candi Dietterich

Window shopping

A Christmas Gift-Making Workshop: Is your group looking for an intergenerational activity to sponsor for your congregation? Could you sponsor a workshop for children to make inexpensive presents to give parents and others? Your public library can provide you with many suitable craft ideas. Members of your youth group could be asked to assist with workshops or childcare. Women unable to help with crafts could be invited to bake cookies for treats. This could provide an ideal time for parents to go Christmas shopping while their children are well supervised. And what a gift that would be!

Ideas for mission giving:

- A United Methodist church in Denver decorates a **mission tree** with tiny white lights at the beginning of Advent. Congregation members purchase five-inch ribbons in Christmas colors for 50 cents each to honor people special to them and, at the same time, decorate the tree. In this way the entire congregation is involved in raising funds for undesignated mission giving.
- Instead of buying an inexpensive gift for a **gift exchange**, give something you already have—a book, a coffee mug filled with goodies, a favorite recipe—and add the amount you would have spent to your Christmas mission gift.
- During Advent, invite the women in your group to set aside a special container—a pop can will do—and put in a designated amount for every cup of coffee, tea or soda they drink, for every movie they see, or every telephone call they make. Together your gifts could be **a great gift** to a local women's shelter or other ministry.

Celebrating the Lord

continued from page 11

assured my forgiveness before God and that we will be reunited with the Creator in a wonderful homecoming. And this feast will celebrate God's victory, when everything in God's purpose is fulfilled and we are living fully as the people of God.

Foot washing: building our spiritual community

Continued from page 12

would also like to note that despite the fact that in our culture there are still many traces of machismo, the Mennonite church in Mexico offers equal opportunity for service to men and women. In Christ we are free.

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

MCCers in Haiti intervene in mob violence

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee workers in Haiti recently tasted the bitterness of mob violence, intervening when they witnessed normally gentle people turn brutal in a crowd. While the workers suffered only physical scratches, they are recovering from the emotional "beating" they took and trying to find ways to apply newfound insights to their work in this Caribbean nation.

Haiti is still without law, despite Canadian and French governmental help in training the country's first civilian police force, says Dan Wiens, MCC Haiti co-director. In the absence of "law and order," people take matters into their own hands.

On Aug. 2, people in the neighborhood close to the Wiens' home in Port-au-Prince caught a man stealing a goat; he later admitted to belonging to a ring of petty thieves operating in the area. By the time MCC workers Brent and Karen Hursey-McLaughlin and Philip and Terry Phibbs Witmer, in a nearby guest house, heard the commotion, a mob was dragging the thief along the road, hitting him with the broad sides of their machetes, stomping on his face with booted feet and burning him with lit cigarettes, Wiens says.

The two couples rushed to the scene, where they saw the crowd tie the goat thief tightly to a telephone post in order to beat and stone him. Alarmed, they positioned themselves between the thief and the crowd.

There began a long and at times ugly three-hour stand-off, while two of the MCC workers first went to try to locate police—the police at the station refused to come, saying they were going off duty in a half hour—and then to pick up Wiens and MCC intern Paul Neufeld.

While the four men used their physical strength to push back the crowd and to break blows aimed at the captured man, Terry Phibbs Witmer and a Haitian friend set off again looking for police or a United Nations vehicle—any civil authority to intervene.

As the situation grew nastier, Phibbs Witmer arrived with a police car. The officers questioned some witnesses, handcuffed the accused thief and prepared to take him away. But the crowd wanted one of their number to accompany the thief—to make sure the police really jailed him. After years and years of abuse and repression by police—in the past run by the military—Haitians have no trust for civil authorities, Wiens explains.

As the MCC workers pray and sort through the event, one thing is clear to them. Although international forces have begun training and equipping a new civilian police force, the job is far from over. The MCC workers question whether the 2,000 remaining United Nations peace-keeping troops should leave Haiti at the end of December, as scheduled.

"With a lack of civil authority, people take a course of vigilante justice. They are frustrated enough to want to put people to death."

Dan Wiens

"That we, in the capital city, had so much trouble finding police willing to come, with all our advantages—phones, vehicles, acquaintances who know people in the police force, our white skins—speaks volumes," says Wiens. "Is it any wonder poor peasants don't even try? With a lack of civil authority, people take the course of vigilante justice. They are frustrated enough to want to put people to death."

The MCC workers are also pondering what some in the crowd told them: that they are outsiders who do not know Haitian ways and should therefore not intervene. Yet they do not regret their actions. Instead, the MCC team is beginning to think about doing more work with Haitian churches "to bring out a stronger witness of

Inside the news

MCCer describes feelings in verse / p. 14

Native groups meet in Montana / p. 15

Seminar studies congregations / p. 16

Commentary: A time for weeping in Ireland / p. 17

Youth raise the rafters / p. 18

Church is more than a building / p. 20

Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont., celebrated its 50th anniversary July 5-7. Nearly 350 current and former members celebrated the event with an outdoor worship service, memorial service and program by the youth group.

• • •

The American Bible Society will replace Bibles and Scripture resources in churches destroyed by recent firebombings. To date, ABS has a list of 80 churches needing help. The replacement Bibles and resources such as children's Scriptures are provided through an ABS grants program.

• • •

The Joint Committee on Violence, appointed by the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC), is developing a statement on Christian responses to violence in North American society. This statement is being prepared for consideration at the 1997 denominational meetings: the GC sessions in Winnipeg and the MC assembly in Orlando, Fla. The committee is asking GC and MC church members to send stories of contemporary Mennonites who have responded with love and nonviolence to violent people and situations. Stories may be sent to Lois Barrett, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 or loisb@gcmc.org.

Christian peace," Wiens says.

Some Haitians in the crowd agreed with their actions, Wiens says, and even helped to the extent they could. Some mothers said they didn't want their children witnessing such brutality. Wiens vividly recalls one man who urged the others to stop taunting and hitting the man. "He wore a chain with a cross around his neck and I knew he was Christian," Wiens says. Another muscular

Is faith the best medicine known to humanity? A survey reported in *National and International Religion Report* showed that 79 percent of Americans feel faith can help people recover from illness or disease. Sixty-three percent feel doctors should discuss faith with their patients, but nine out of 10 said a doctor has never mentioned faith during a consultation. (*AFA Journal*)

• • •

The Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Amish population in the United States increased 3.4 percent last year. Much of this growth occurred in Old Order and conservative groups. The number of U.S. (and Puerto Rican) Mennonites and Amish totals 289,550. The General Conference Mennonite Church, the third largest Mennonite group, has 26,203 U.S. members, losing 711 from last year. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

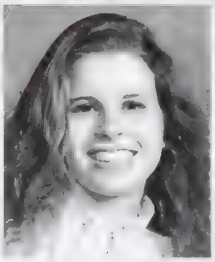
• • •

Two youth from Good Shepherd Community Church, Sioux Falls, S.D., were winners in a book-wrap design contest sponsored by the peace and social concerns committee of the Northern District Conference. Committee members wanted an alternative to the book covers the military offers high school students. Covers designed by Melody Kleinsasser and Shane Perkinson will be printed and distributed to all high school students in the Northern District. (Angela Kaufman)

• • •

The 10th annual Minn-Kota Mennonite Central Committee relief sale held July 26-27 raised more than $90,000 U.S. A House Against Hunger, being built in Sioux Falls, S.D., will add to the sale proceeds. The Mountain Lake *Observer/Advocate* reported that a crew mistakenly installed insulation at the Sioux Falls house instead of at a house down the block. When they realized the error, the crew said their labor at the MCC house was free. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

MCCer describes feelings in verse



Witmer

Mennonite Central Committee Haiti worker Terry Phibbs Witmer wrote the poem below following an Aug. 2 incident in which she and other MCC workers intervened when a mob attempted to kill a man caught stealing a goat.

Witmer works in health development in the rural area of Rankit. She, her husband, Phil, and another Rankit-based couple had traveled to Port-au-Prince prior to an MCC Haiti unit retreat. Witmer is a member of Zion Hill Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

In the presence of Christ, weeping

Masons, sweaty and bare-chested,
interrupted from the day's work,
drag the bleeding man to an electric pole
and tie him with ropes
around his legs and arms and chest.

They wrap black electrical cord
around his wrists so tightly
his blood is cut off
and he screams from the pain.

I call out in angry protest
and scan the crowd for someone
with merciful eyes.

My husband stands beside me
and my knees are shaking.

Then another cowardly, frightened man
rushes forward with a cinder block
hefted in the air,
shouting to all that this thief
will die.

And I move my shaking knees
and stand between the thief and
the raised block.

When cigarettes are lit to
burn his eyes and flesh,
we push away the hands
and again cry out for mercy.

The crowd hears my pleas,
they see my tears,
and some laugh.

Three hours we stand there,
at times bolstered by
a teen-age boy who
joins our living barrier
in front of the thief.

And the gentle hands of the
weight-lifter, loosening the electrical
cords in an act of mercy
to let the thief keep his hands.

When we find police to come
and they drive off with the man,
alive,
I can't cry at the time
I most want to.

Angry men tell us to go back
to our own country,
that they don't deal with thieves
the way we do.

I nod and move slowly back
to the house.

That evening I wash the man's blood
out of my shirt
in the bathroom sink.

My husband stands at the next sink
washing his face slowly
in cold water, again and again, as if
to remove all traces or
memories of the day.

But it lingers with us in a way
both holy and evil.

I thank God
the man did not die that day,
under the hands of his brothers,
in the presence of Christ weeping.

Haitian man loosened the man's tied hands to ease some of his pain.

Some of the MCC workers involved visited the jailed man on Monday, taking him food and water; they wanted to explain what motivated them to plead for his life. Wiens also plans to talk with people in the neighborhood about the event and why he did what he did.

The workers were "impressed with the medical care the thief had received and that the justice system is indeed working better than we had thought," Wiens says. The police had recovered some of the items the man had stolen and returned them to the community. They also arrested one of the thief's accomplices.

The MCC workers hope these actions show the community that the police are becoming increasingly capable. And they continue to hope the U.S. and Canadian governments will persevere in supporting Haiti as it builds a civilian-based, democratic society. *Emily Will*

Native groups meet in Montana

Lame Deer, Mont. (GCMC)—Indian Christians met at a campsite near Lame Deer July 24-28 for fellowship, learning, sharing and inspiration.

One hundred sixty-one people who relate to Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (General Conference Mennonite Church), Native Ministries (Conference of Mennonites in Canada) or United Native Ministries (Mennonite Church) attended Assembly '96.

The Northern Cheyenne Mennonite churches in Lame Deer; Busby, Mont., and Ashland, Mont., hosted the event. They began food preparations the previous year by harvesting and preserving wild plums, Juneberries and chokecherries. The meat from 12 deer was also dried for the occasion.

The diversity of the group became evident as those gathered named their tribal ancestry: Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cherokee, Choctaw, Cree, Creek, Crow, Hopi, Hidatsa, Kiowa/ Commanche, Lakota, Metis, Mohawk, Navajo, Northern Cheyenne, Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Shawnee and Southern Cheyenne.

Hopi Elmer Myron, Phoenix, emphasized honoring Jesus by making him Lord of our lives.

Choctaw Gary Tubby, Louisville, Miss., saw faith in Jesus, lived out before others, as foundational to honoring Christ.

Ray Horst

Faithful elders: *At left, Southern Cheyenne Bertha Little Coyote, from Oklahoma, and Choctaw Essie Cotton, Mississippi*

Terry Widrick, Selkirk, Man., of Mohawk background, urged participants to reflect God's love, especially by loving those who disagree with us.

A variety of music was shared, including translated hymns in Hopi and Choctaw, country and western, gospel, Indian flute, indigenous spiritual songs in Crow and Cheyenne, and an Ojibwa song.

Northern Cheyenne Joe Walks Along, pastor from Lame Deer, led a workshop in which he told of his own experiences with racism both inside and outside the church. He pointed to Ephesians 2 for answers.

Ethan Good, Neshoba, Miss., presented a workshop on healing damaged emotions. He urged the restoration of altars, the places where we meet God, through prayer, honesty and time.

Other workshops included topics such as integration and indigenous gospel music.

Tours were offered each afternoon, including four Northern Cheyenne communities on the reservation and the Little Big Horn battlefield, where Sioux and Cheyenne overcame General Custer.

Navajo young adult David Smiley told of the loss of six uncles and his father to alcohol. Smiley's father froze to death outside the door of his home.

"I can only visit their graves," he

Comunidad de Fe and Grace Community churches offered vacation Bible school to children in southwest Chicago in July. Adult leaders and youth from Comunidad de Fe provided Bible stories, crafts and games to over 80 Hispanic and Anglo children ages 3 to 17. An offering project was given to a Mennonite Central Committee camp for the deaf in Nigeria. (Fred Doering)

• • •

Mennonite Economic Development Associates will hold its fall convention Oct. 31-Nov. 3 in Winnipeg. The theme for the gathering is "The Art of Business." Laurie Beth Jones, author of *Jesus, CEO*, and Howard Brenneman of Mennonite Mutual Aid will speak at the event. Operatic tenor Ben Heppner will perform a benefit concert. For information call 1-800-665-7026.

• • •

Graduate students pursuing careers in the field of nursing are invited to apply for loans being offered by Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Board of Missions for the 1997-98 academic year. The loans are intended to promote research, leadership development and education in nursing. Deadline for application is Feb. 1, 1997. For information, contact Amy Herr, MHS, 2160 Lincoln Hwy. East, Box 6, Lancaster, PA 17602-1150; (717) 293-7125.

• • •

"The Juggling Act: Balancing Our Commitments" was the theme for the annual Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Nurses Association convention held June 20-23. Close to 300 nurses, physicians, dentists and other health-care professionals and their families attended the event. The group will sponsor the "Steve Roth Fund" to help with interest on medical education debts while participants serve in a mission setting for one to three years. Doctors are working on a statement regarding physician-assisted suicide.

An International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church will be held Sept. 29. The goal for this event is to have at least 150,000 churches in 110 countries praying on the same day for believers who are persecuted because of their faith. For information, contact Dwight Bigson at World Evangelical Fellowship, P.O. Box WEF, Wheaton, IL 60189; (630) 668-0440; e-mail: wef-na@xc.org or the web site: http://www/xc.org/wef/wefintro.

• • •

Mennonite Health Services and the MCC Canada Mental Health and Disabilities Program invite college or graduate students pursuing careers in mental health fields both in Canada and the United States to apply for scholarships through the Elmer Ediger Memorial Scholarship Fund. Ediger was one of the four founders of MHS. The scholarships are for the 1997-98 academic year. Four to six students will receive the $1,000 to $1,200 grants. Application deadline is Feb. 1, 1997. Information is available from Amy Herr, MHS, 2160 Lincoln Hwy. East, Box 6, Lancaster, PA 17602-1150 , (717) 293-7125, or Irma Janzen, MCC Canada Mental Health and Disabilities Program, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. has endorsed a fledgling campaign to curb world military spending by the year 2000. An initiative of Oscar Arias, former president of Costa Rica and 1987 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, the campaign hopes to redirect world military spending to human need without reducing security. MCC U.S. has joined some 45 other national religious and humanitarian groups in supporting the project in the United States. The campaign believes the world is operating under an outdated definition of military security focusing on arms and the capacity to wage war. Campaign supporters would like to broaden the concept of human security to encompass life without poverty, hunger, disease, human rights abuses and war.

said, "but we Indian youth are watching how you parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents walk the Christian walk. Don't let down your guard. Don't give up on young people. My mother always prayed for me."

In the final Bible study, Hopi Nadenia Myron gave blankets to three faithful elders—Choctaw Essie Cotton, Northern Cheyenne Gladys Old Mouse and Metis Carrie Jacobson. She also called the pastors present to come forward for anointing and individual prayer for their ministries.

Walks Along acknowledged the 45 years of ministry given by David Weaver and his wife, Ida, at Poarch Community Church (Creek), Atmore, Ala. Weaver had long ago encouraged fellowship meetings.

At the closing Communion service, Steve Jessen, pastor of Ashland Christian Fellowship, commented on the unusual spiritual depth of this camp. Cree Lorna Ross, Cross Lake, Man., requested prayer for God's help in ending her mother's struggle with alcoholism and Lorna and her husband Sam's addiction to tobacco.

Her request opened the way for several public prayer sessions. People with special needs were prayed for with many joining in the laying on of hands.

As the group took Communion, Jessen prayed, "Lord make us one." *Malcolm Wenger*

Seminar studies congregations

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—How do seminary professors better understand the congregations for which they are preparing leaders, and church administrators the congregations they serve?

To answer this question, the Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS) organized a Congregational Studies Seminar June 6-11 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

The seminar's primary objectives were to understand how the gospel has taken shape in a particular congregation and how the congregation conceives and carries out its mission To come to this understanding, participants needed to learn effective methods for studying a congregation.

"The main thing we learned was the method of congregational studies," explains Ross T. Bender, director of IMS, who coordinated the event. William McKinney, president of Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Calif., and Barbara Wheeler, president of Auburn Theological Seminary in New York, served as leaders.

To learn this method, the group, which included 19 seminary professors and conference and denominational leaders, selected two Goshen, Ind., congregations for in-depth study: the rural Clinton Frame Mennonite Church and the suburban Silverwood Mennonite Church.

As the learnings "spill over into our awareness, they will shape how we do theological education. ... We will take seriously these living organisms."

Ross Bender

The study involved a variety of research methods: a survey completed by members of the congregations; Sunday morning visits to the congregations; interviews with congregational leaders; census data; and interviews with local community leaders, including business people, school officials, health providers, law enforcement officers and newspaper editors.

Seminar participants took the information they gleaned from these diverse sources and organized them into reports that were then shared with the congregations' leaders. The reports gave the leaders four "frames" for looking at their congregations: the community surrounding the congregation, the culture or identity of the congregation, the resources within the congregation (people, finances, facilities) and how the congregation makes decisions and gets things done.

After using the congregational studies methods to get to know the two congregations, participants grappled with broader questions of how these methods can be used.

Charlotte Holsopple Glick, Indiana-Michigan conference minister, says the seminar "raised my awareness of how to offer words of affirmation and encouragement for what is going well in a congregation and how to offer observations of what could move a congregation into the future." She was reminded of "the blessed mix" of all that contributes to congregational life and found the seminar helped her see both the overall view as well as frames through which one can look at an individual congregation.

The seminary professors who attended the seminar plan to keep exploring how the methods they used can be woven into seminary courses and how the learnings can help shape seminary education as a whole.

Though it is too soon to have evaluated these questions, Bender suggested some ways congregational studies could contribute to the AMBS curriculum.

One is the "Minister in the Church" course, in which students are assigned to a local congregation for a nine-month internship. By using the methods and resources presented in the seminar, students could come to understand their congregations better.

Another outcome, Bender says, is that as the learnings "spill over into our awareness, they will shape how we do theological education. ... We will take seriously these living organisms." *Mary E. Klassen*

COMMENTARY

A time for weeping in Ireland

John M. and Naomi Lederach

Belfast, Northern Ireland (MCC)—"In this place of great hatred and little room, it depends, as all the big questions do, on which side is speaking."

We have felt this to be true as we try to understand the depth of feeling on both sides of the long-standing conflict here in Northern Ireland.

Although it is far too simplistic to talk about the conflict here as between Roman Catholics and Protestants, it is one way to discuss the issues.

But a fuller reading of what happened here in July with the Orange Order marches—events that tore apart Ireland's fragile peace process—requires some understanding of the many sub-groups and their histories.

The Orange Order, founded more than 200 years ago not far from Portadown, has been an integral part of many Protestants' lives. Protestants formed it in an attempt to protect themselves at a time when they felt under great threat by Catholics.

Today the order's parades represent a way of expressing the members' "Britishness," their identity and determination that Northern Ireland remain a part of the United Kingdom and not become a part of a United Ireland.

About 3,500 marches take place annually, most of them in July, a time when Protestants celebrate their military victory over Catholics in 1690.

But demographics have changed over the last 25 years of "the troubles." Thus, some of the marches' traditional routes now pass through majority Catholic communities, setting up contentious flash-points. Catholics object to the marches. Ugly incidents occur during the marches, and communities are closed off while hundreds of marchers pass through when, Catholics believe, the marchers could take other routes to avoid confrontation.

> ***The current situation is extremely dangerous, often described as the worst in 26 years of the troubles, reminiscent of the most discouraging and devastating of times.***
>
> **John and Naomi Lederach**

The police are in the unenviable position of making decisions about the marches' routes. But this year, after the police told the Orangemen they could not march down Garvaghy Road in a Catholic community, widespread violence broke out—rioting, looting, burning, blocking roadways, including roads to the airport and the docks. This intimidated Catholics, many of whom felt forced to leave their homes.

After a five-day confrontation with some 15,000 Orangemen, the police reversed the decision. About 1,300 Orangemen from the Portadown district were allowed to march down Garvaghy Road without restrictions. Catholics felt betrayed. Again, it seemed they could not trust the police and British government to treat them equally. And, as could have been anticipated, Catholics also began venting their frustration and anger.

Dangerous times: The ensuing days and nights of riots—petrol bombs,

Church Women United is sponsoring World Community Day, Friday, Nov. 1. The theme is "Women and Violence and the Church." Resource material and background information are available from Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 812, New York, NY 10115; or call 1-800-298-5551, ext. 3339.

• • •

"I have seen countries whose meager coffers have been drained to purchase weapons of war while their people suffer an unconscionable standard of living," stated U.S. Senator Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas. Despite her poignant testimony, the U.S. Senate defeated by a vote of 65-35 an amendment that would have set criteria to restrict U.S. arms sales abroad. More than 1,000 Mennonites and Brethren in Christ from 24 states signed petitions supporting the Code of Conduct amendment; the MCC Washington Office delivered the petitions to the appropriate congressional offices. Kassebaum's office said the senator had received a significant amount of mail from Kansas Mennonites who favor the code.

• • •

Not only have U.S. legislators defeated "code of conduct" legislation banning weapons exports to countries that do not abide by certain standards, but now the U.S. defense secretary wants to sell high-tech weapons to Latin American countries. A ban on the sale of such weapons to Latin America has been respected by both Democratic and Republican administrations since the 1970s. Advocates of lifting restrictions say many U.S. citizens depend on international arms sales for their employment. Some view weapons as a vital export product of the United States, which now controls 60 percent of the international arms trade.

wanton destruction, shooting, helicopters using spotlights—have resulted in a drift toward a new cycle of violence by another generation.

The current situation is extremely dangerous, often described as the worst in 26 years of the troubles, reminiscent of the most discouraging and devastating of times.

Last year Mennonite Central Committee/Mennonite Board of Missions worker Joe Campbell and colleague Brendan McAllister of the Mediation Network for Northern Ireland mediated an acceptable accommodation to both marchers and residents. Local Orangemen paraded silently down Garvaghy, no drums or bands, and police assured Catholic residents the 1995 march would be the last.

Following the march, though, some Protestant political leaders later denied they had made any compromise.

This year, after repeated and often dangerous attempts at mediation, Joe and Brendan became aware of the Catholic residents' depth of mistrust. They also found the Orangemen unwilling to negotiate alternatives to marching down Garvaghy. A group of church leaders failed to bring the opposing groups together.

A plea for forgiveness: On Sunday morning after the march, we went first to a Catholic Mass and later to a small Methodist worship service. About 150 people were seated in the sanctuary of the Clonard Monastery.

One young girl read a prayer she had written that described how many of her friends were Protestants, how they used to go to the city center together, lamenting that this is all changed.

The priest read a prayer appealing for peace and reconciliation, written by a Protestant. He gave his sermon on continuing to work for peace despite all that had happened in the past week. He used the illustration of a Catholic man whose son had been killed, likely a sectarian killing.

The priest quoted the father standing at the gravesite with a message to the world: "I forgive the ones who did the horrible killing of my son, and I plead with the community not to retaliate." He called for forgiveness. We wept as we heard this plea, and knelt in prayer as the congregation went forward for the sacrament. *John M. and Naomi Lederach work in counseling and mediation in Northern Ireland.*

Editor's note: *The Lederachs and Campbells have coveted the prayers and support they have felt in the past. They ask that people continue to uphold them in their prayers as the situation in Northern Ireland continues to be unsteady.*

Youth raise the rafters

Lowell Detweiler (MDS)

Youth from Pequea Brethren in Christ Church, Lancaster, Pa., help raise church walls and rafters at Mount Zoar Baptist Church, Boligee, Ala. The church was burned to the ground earlier this year. Since May more than 250 Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers and nine youth groups traveled to Alabama to help rebuild the church. A dedication was to be held Sept. 8.

Novica, **an Italian Roman Catholic magazine, is flouting the church's traditional opposition to astrology by beginning a monthly advice column for each of the 12 zodiac signs. The advice, given by a Franciscan priest, is strictly "based on the New Testament or the writings of St. Francis of Assisi." (*****United Church Observer*****)**

• • •

Heinrich Ratzlaff Epp, a Mennonite psychologist in Paraguay, is a member of Paraguay's congress, representing the Chaco. An article in the September-October issue of *Nature Conservancy* outlines Ratzlaff's plan for protecting the environment of the Chaco, an area with an amazing diversity of wildlife. In 1995, Ratzlaff and fellow Mennonite Wilfried Geibrecht began the Foundation for the Sustainable Development of the Chaco, whose main goal is to strengthen existing national parks there. Says Ratzlaff, "It is important to save ail we can of the natural Chaco because these are areas that are the most easily destroyed and irreparable if man touches them."

• • •

Mennonite congregations in New York City have begun a library of books on Mennonite themes. The library would like to expand the selection of books available, especially books by and about Mennonites beyond North America (with a focus on Spanish publications), peace theology and practice, international diplomacy and victim-offender reconciliation. Donations of books and funds are welcome. Contact Peace and Anabaptist Library, c/o Menno House, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; or visit the Menno House web site at scils.rutgers.edu/‘birkey/mennohse.html.

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service
SALT—Serving And Learning Together

DEATHS

Esther Wiebe Becker, 75, died July 26 in Albany, Ore. Her husband, Henry D. Becker, survives. She was a member of First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, Idaho. From 1951 to 1964 she was a missionary nurse in India with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

MINISTERS

Brice Balmer has ended as pastor at First Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Rusty Bonham is minister of high school youth at First Church, Newton, Kan.

Walt Braun has resigned as pastor at Morden (Man.) Bergthaler Church.

Robert Kaufman is part-time pastor at New Hope Church, Olathe, Kan.

Frank Keller is interim pastor at First Church, Beatrice, Neb.

Lee Lever was installed Aug. 18 as pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Marcia Rempel has ended as minister of youth and young adults at First Church, Newton, Kan.

Kathy and **Stan Shantz** will become pastors at Trinity Church, Glendale, Ariz., Jan. 1, 1997.

Mervin Stoltzfus is part-time pastor at Hope Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Chue Vang was installed as pastor at Hmong Community Church, Fresno, Calif., June 15.

WORKERS

Charmin Bortz, Durham, N.C., began a one-year MVS term July 20 in victim advocacy for the Minnesota Citizens Council on Crime in Minneapolis.

Markus Freisinger, Radolfzell, Germany, began a two-year MVS term July 30 in Cincinnati as a home repair worker.

Herman Lapp, Gap, Pa., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 1 teaching at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

John R. Lohrenz, Fort Garry Fellowship, Winnipeg, is director of constituency relations and stewardship for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Kelly and **Shawn Neumann**, Abbotsford, B.C., began a one-year MVS term June 12 in Kansas City, Kan. Shawn will work as a communications associate with Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Kelly as a literacy and computer teacher for migrants and refugees.

Cheryl Penner, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 5 as an assistant teacher at Friendship Day Care in

Bortz

Freisinger

Lapp

K. Neumann

S. Neumann

Penner

Phillips

Schroeder

Scott

Short

Texans have the right to carry concealed handguns, but Texans who do so are not welcome in San Antonio's Catholic churches. The Archdiocese of San Antonio has posted signs in English and Spanish outside its churches saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers. Please no guns permitted on the premises. Property of the Archdiocese of San Antonio." Archbishop Patrick Flores said the signs "proclaim our belief that our security rests in God, not in guns." (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Trying to combat traffic gridlock, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reports, Indonesia has introduced a law banning cars with fewer than three passengers in certain areas. This has produced a population of professional passengers (called "Joki"), people who hang out near restricted zones and are hired by passing motorists. This, in turn, has given rise to a new occupational terminology: I passenge, you passenge, we are passenging. Police have been assigned to stop cars and attempt to find out whether youngsters are genuine offspring of motorists. (*The COMmunicator*)

• • •

Seventh-day Adventist Church youth across North America were encouraged recently to take part in "noise fasts" lasting anywhere from seven to 10 days. The idea was to get youth to identify moments of noise in their lives—TV, CD players, cars, even glossy magazines—and replace them with silence. During this time youth were encouraged to pursue a number of suggested activities that included going to the lake to feed the ducks, praying or "climbing a tree to read the story of Zacchaeus." American Adventists held a 10-day noise fast in mid-January. About one-quarter of the denomination's churches participated. Canadian churches held their noise fast in mid-March. (*The United Church Observer*)

Hutchinson, Kan.

Jessica Phillips, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., began a one-year MVS term July 15 as a teacher with the Chicago school district.

Janelle Schroeder, Nutana Park Church, Saskatoon, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Bulembu, Swaziland, working in child care.

Aaron Scott, Hutchinson, Kan., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 3 as a community worker at Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.

Meredith Short, Pine Grove Church, Stryker, Ohio, began a two-year MVS term July 6 as a social worker in Chicago.

Lyris Short-Goetzke, Langley (B.C.) Fellowship and Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, as an office assistant and tutor.

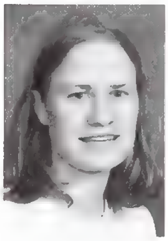
Bryan and **Julie Moyer Suderman** completed their COM term in Colombia in June.

George and **Tobia Veith**, Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon, have returned to Asia after a one-year North America Assignment, and will begin new work in Macau.

Andy and Susan Wade, Evergreen Church, Bellevue, Wash., have begun a four-year COM term in Hong Kong, helping a Mennonite church there become a cell church.

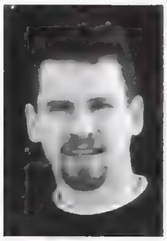
Curtis Wiebe, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., and First Church, Edmonton, Alta., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Curitiba, Brazil, as a day-care worker.

Julianne Wolfe, United Mennonite Church, Black Creek, B.C., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Indonesia teaching English and music.


Short-Goetzke

B. Suderman

J. Suderman


G. Veith

T. Veith

A. Wade

S. Wade

Wiebe

Wolfe

Church is more than a building

On July 28, members of Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind., found their sanctuary looking like the victim of a firebombing. Windows and doors were boarded up and "caution" tape surrounded the building. Signs read, "Due to last night's fire, worship will be held on the north lawn." The outdoor service began with, "This morning we find out if we are idolaters. If we cannot worship without our familiar sanctuary, then we exchanged our worship of God for the things that God has created." *Barry Schmell*

Israel is considering a law that would allow torture in certain instances, reports *Amnesty Action*. While the legislation states that a public servant who tortures or authorizes torture is liable for 10 to 20 years imprisonment, it also makes an exception for inflicting "pain or suffering inherent in interrogation procedures or punishment according to law." (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

***Youthworker Update* reports that men buy 80 percent of CD-ROMs. Laura Groppe hopes to change that. Groppe, who has won an Academy Award and four MTV video awards, is designing CD-ROM games aimed at girls. The first is to be released this summer. Called "Let's Talk About It," it is a series of games that boost self-esteem, including features on sports, fashion, history, health and journaling. A recent survey shows that 85 percent of young women believe computer games would be fun if more were designed with girls in mind. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)**

• • •

According to the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, marketers have coined the word "screenagers" to describe the generation of 18- to 24-year-old, technologically savvy consumers who are as comfortable surfing the Internet as previous generations were talking on the telephone. Seventy percent of "Generation Xers" use a computer every day, while 43 percent own a personal computer and another 26 percent plan to buy one. They are also the largest group of Internet users. While "Baby Boomers" for the most part had to learn to use computers to be productive at work, "screenagers" have grown up using computers. (*The COMmunicator*)

Goshen College invites applicants for a two-year position in **applied mathematics and computer science** to begin January or August 1997. Depending on program growth, a long-term position is possible. A master's degree and graduate study in applied mathematics and computer science are required; a Ph.D. in mathematics, computer science or a related area is preferred. Responsibilities include teaching introductory and advanced courses. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, seeks faculty committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send a curriculum vitae and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Camp Friedenswald seeks a full-time **program director**, beginning Jan. 1, 1997, or earlier. Remuneration includes salary, housing and comprehensive insurance. Responsibilities include summer program coordination, retreat and special event development and public relations. Bachelor's degree preferred. Youth ministry experience helpful.

Submit resume and three references **by Oct. 7**, to **Christopher Gill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; (616) 476-9744**.

Administrative assistant—Locust Grove Mennonite School, with 460 students in K-8, has an employment opportunity beginning as soon as possible for a person with interpersonal, organizational and secretarial skills to work in a two-person office.

Candidates are invited to inquire with **Dave Helmus, Principal, by faxing their resume to (717) 394-4944 or mailing their resume to the school at 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576**.

MVS alumni!
Please inform us of your current address.
Call (316) 283-5100.

Scholarships for students planning to attend **Urbana '96** are available on a first-come, first-served basis from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The deadline for applications is Dec. 1.

Urbana '96 is an InterVarsity-sponsored student missions conference Dec. 27-31 at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. For more information, contact **Karen McCabe-Juhnke, COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; e-mail com@gcmc.org**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **staff attorney**. Qualifications include a J.D. degree from an accredited law school, license to practice, membership in good standing with the applicant's state bar association, and willingness and ability to become licensed in Indiana. Knowledge of the health-care industry, managed-care organizations and insurance products is preferred. Professional work ethic, excellent communication skills and an understanding of MMA's mission as part of the Mennonite church and related denominations are required.

Direct inquiries, letters of application along with resume and references to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; 1-800-348-7468; fax (219) 533-5364**.

Goshen College seeks a **director of degree completion programs**. This is an opportunity for a creative educational administrator to help adults earn bachelor's degrees in organizational management or nursing. The director leads a staff of three professionals and one support person to develop, plan, market, organize and deliver effective programs. Some teaching may be required. The position offers a 12-month contract and reports to the academic dean. Candidates must have teaching and administrative experience in higher education as well as a commitment to Christian higher education and beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. M.A. required, Ph.D. preferred.

Send letters of application, resume and three references to **John Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http//www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be received until **Sept. 30**.

Conrad Grebel College

- a unique Mennonite college on the campus of one of Canada's finest universities
- Grebel students have access to six faculties and 141 programs (study computer engineering, Greek, architecture, math accountancy, medieval studies, music or earth sciences, to name only a few)
- tuition, room and board at Conrad Grebel is among the most reasonable of any Mennonite school in North America (approximately $5,500 U.S. per year)

We'd love to hear from you.

For more information,
write, phone or fax:
Mary Brubaker-Zehr
Dean of Students
Conrad Grebel College
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G6
telephone: (519) 885-0220, ext. 251
fax: (519) 885-0014

PLANNED GIVING

CORN?
instead of cash

Give a farm commodity to Mennonite Central Committee instead of cash. Commodity donations reduce self-employment and income taxes by nearly half the value of your contribution, depending on your tax situation.

It's almost like giving a gift for half price!

To find out more, contact MCC or your Mennonite Foundation representative.

Mennonite Central Committee 717 859-3889
Mennonite Foundation 800 348-7468

Reviews

BOOKS

A CHILD'S VALUE

Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation
by Jonathan Kozol (Crown, 1995)

Reviewed by Charlotte A. Ellison, Holland, Mich.

Amazing Grace invites us to enter a strange world hidden in our shadow. Take the short subway ride from Manhattan to the South Bronx and Mott Haven, the largest racially segregated concentration of poor in America. Spend a night on our meanest streets; visit a community usually made invisible by society.

The text opens to us the lives of its residents, listens and tells us their stories, their circumstances, their pain and their prayers. With careful detail, it confronts the popular opinion that poverty is the result of irrational behaviors by faceless undeserving poor.

This book is an outing every comfortable American should make, an inspection tour, a journey toward understanding. It is a listening conference with the poor and it carefully includes the most silent—the children. One-third of Mott Haven is made up of children, terribly, terribly poor children, exposed to the worst we have to offer.

Maria, a 16-year-old, astutely summarizes the spiritual effects of her neighborhood's crushing poverty:

"If you weave enough bad things into the fiber of a person's life—sickness and filth, old mattresses and other junk thrown in the streets and other ugly ruined things, and ruined people, a prison here, sewage there, drug dealers here, the homeless people over there, then give us the very worst schools anyone could think of, hospitals that keep you waiting for 10 hours, police that don't show up when someone's dying, take the train that's underneath the street in the good neighborhoods and put it up above where it shuts out the sun, you can guess that life will not be very nice and children will not have much sense of being glad of who they are."

Amazing Grace is, indeed, a "gently written book" about the post-modern American ghetto, which is not a social accident but rather a creation sustained by "greed, neglect, racism and expedience." It asks one simple question: "What is the value of a child's life?" It is a powerful and essential look at this increasingly cold hour in history.

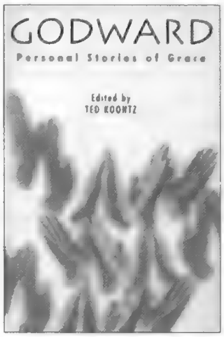
ANABAPTIST SPIRITUALITY

Godward: Personal Stories of Grace, *edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996, 192 pages)*

Reviewed by Sheri Hostetler, Piedmont, Calif.

Anabaptist spirituality has tended to emphasize doing rather than being. To put it another way, we focus more on how our actions either do or do not make us acceptable to God, rather than on the fact that who we are—right now—is a person loved unconditionally by God.

Godward: Personal Stories of Grace provides a powerful, much-needed corrective to this lopsided tendency. In the book, 24 leading Mennonite Christians tell how they have been touched and transformed by the unmerited, unexpected actions of grace in their lives.



Refreshingly free of cookie-cutter language and simplistic, formulaic "solutions" to the spiritual life, these stories demonstrate that God's grace does not come one-size-fits-all. The common thread throughout all the stories, however, is the fundamental religious experience of letting go of fear and the need to control and trusting in the love and grace of God.

Editor Ted Koontz deserves much credit for getting a group of people to do something that, oddly enough, is quite risky in the church: talk openly about their spiritual lives. As Koontz observes, our personal religious experiences—along with sex and money—are facets of our existence we are the most reticent about sharing with each other. Perhaps this is because in telling these stories we must reveal our deepest wounds, our sinfulness. The contributors to *Godward* do this with sometimes surprising candor.

The book's main weakness, of which Koontz is aware, is the lack of racial, ethnic and class diversity among the storytellers. Contributors come dis-

TOURMAGINATION

MEXICO '96
November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

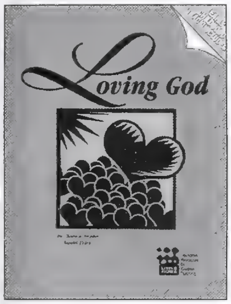
proportionately from the editor's own world of North American Mennonite academics and church leaders.

But this fact doesn't, in the end, deter from the book's power. These stories demonstrate that "grace," "redemption" and "conversion" are not mere words mouthed on Sunday mornings but refreshingly real encounters with a Mystery beyond our imagining. We Mennonites need more books like *Godward*.

CHOOSING TO LOVE GOD

Loving God *by Eleanor Snyder and Susan Pries (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 206 pages)*

Reviewed by Katherine B. Wiens, Newton, Kan.



Loving God is an excellent and comprehensive resource book for children's programs. It contains five stories plus activities about people in the Bible. The sessions include "Hannah: Loving God by Praying," "Samuel: Loving God by Listening," "Jonathan: Loving God by Loving Others," "Abigail: Loving God by Making Peace," and "David: Loving God by Showing Kindness." The objective of the authors is to help children see that God's love is unconditional, that God loved all these people the same and to help children choose to love God and those around them. The book can be used in many church and home situations.

Loving God provides activities related to the story that encompass a wide age span and accommodates children with different attention levels and learning styles. The book divides each session into four parts: "Worship," where the children all meet together, and three rotation centers: "Talk and Move," "Pray and Learn" and "Make and Take." The activities in this book allow the children to be involved and do not expect them to sit quietly and be passively taught.

The book is comprehensive and provides readers almost everything they need to do the sessions. It gives patterns for arts and crafts, registration forms, sign-up sheets and many other usable resources. Because the book is so comprehensive, it needs to be studied before using it to make sure one is taking advantage of the full program. It also recommends nine different leaders, but finding this many people to be leaders may be a problem for smaller churches. Still, the book gives other options for handling leadership.

This book would be a wonderful addition to the library of anyone who works with children and youth. Because of the wealth of activities, readers can easily find something that will fit their situation.

Resources

- **Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective** is available in summary form. The 11-page pamphlet is available from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 or flp@gcmc.org; $.75 U.S./ $1.10 Cdn. each.
- **Free stickers** of the General Conference Mennonite Church symbol (the "pumpkin"), four children's bulletins and a project list are in the 1996 children's activity packet. For a free copy for your congregation call (316) 283-5100, ext. 235 or jo@gcmc.org.
- **Where Are the Beans?** is a 13-minute video that shows how international debt affects farmers in Honduras. The video can be adapted for use in elementary grades. Available for purchase ($15 U.S./$20 Cdn.) or free loan from Mennonite Central Committee, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, (204) 261-6381, or your nearest MCC office.
- **Pacifist Impulse in Historical Perspective**, edited by Harvey L. Dyck (University of Toronto Press, 1996, $70), is a collection of 23 essays exploring the ideas and activities of pacifist people and groups throughout the centuries.
- **Darling Little Girl: A Sexual Abuse Survivor Sings** is a recording of songs by Jenny Schrag, accompanied by Doug and Jude Krehbiel of Road Less Travelled. Available from Faith & Life Bookstore, (316) 283-2210, $9.98 U.S.
- **Meditations for New Parents** by Gerald and Sara Wenger Shenk (Herald Press, 1996, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.) is added to a series of meditation books, this time including fathers.
- **Entrepreneurs in the Faith Community** by Calvin W. Redekop and Benjamin W. Redekop (Herald Press, 1996, $17.95 U.S./$25.75 Cdn.) profiles Mennonites in business.
- **In Search of Unity** by Anna Ens (CMBC Publications, 1996, $20 Cdn.) is the story of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba. Order from CMBC Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781.
- **Doing Life: Reflections of Men and Women Serving Life Sentences** by Howard Zehr (Good Books, 1996, $15.95 U.S.) is a collection of photo portraits and interviews of people in Pennsylvania prisons serving life sentences without possibility of parole.
- **Cloud of Witnesses: Rediscovering Anabaptism**, is a 65-minute video on how Christians in England are using the Anabaptist movement as a model for vital Christianity. Order from Mennonite Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534; video plus study guide $34.95 U.S./$48.50 Cdn.
- **Church World Service 1997 Global Calendar** and greeting cards are now available. Calendars are $20 U.S., greeting cards $10/set. Order prepaid from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515.
- **Hunger: Causes and Solutions** is a four-page study/action guide. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; order no. ED 9659, $.30 U.S. each or 4/$1.
- **For the Healing of the Nations** is a booklet of 30 daily devotions celebrating Church World Service's 50th anniversary. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515-0968; $3 U.S. each (includes postage/handling).
- **Peaceful Parenting in a Violent World** by Dr. Joseph N. Cress and Burt Berlowe (Perspective Publications, 1996, $14.95 U.S.) teaches nonviolent parenting techniques.
- **Take and Read—Spiritual Reading: An Annotated List** by Eugene H. Peterson (Eerdmans, 1996, $10 U.S.) attempts to rekindle the activity of spiritual reading, considering any book in a spiritual way.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 510
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Bless the children

Jesus said that when we welcome children we welcome Jesus (Mark 9:37). Furthermore, unless we receive the reign of God as a child, we will not enter it (Mark 10:15). If that's true, we have some serious soul searching to do.

Jesus lived in a time when children had no rights. They were powerless. Adults could do what they liked to them without fear of consequences.

While today is different, it's not a whole lot better. Children around the world suffer from horrendous conditions. Every day in developing nations, according to Church World Service, 34,000 children under age 5 die from hunger and preventable diseases. That's 24 children a minute, equal to three 747s crashing every hour, every day, all year. Seventy percent of childhood deaths are associated with malnutrition and preventable diseases.

It's also getting worse in so-called developed nations. In the United States, for example, 30 million people were hungry in 1991, compared with 20 million in 1985, according to Bread for the World. The U.S. child poverty rate is double that of any other industrialized country. And 10 in every 1,000 U.S. children die before reaching their fifth birthday, a higher rate than any other developed country.

> *We are all called—by Jesus—to welcome and defend children. We have the opportunity to bless them, and they can teach us about receiving the reign of God.*

When our political leaders make laws, children are not given a high priority. Witness two recent decisions by U.S. leaders: (1) welfare reform that will have direct detrimental effects on poor children and (2) a military budget that adds billions more to what the Pentagon was asking while budgets for education, housing and welfare are being cut.

National politics may seem too distant. What about your local community? Is it like many, where budgets for public schools are cut, while more money goes, for example, to road repairs to satisfy our automobile addiction?

If what Jesus said is true, then we in the church will act on priorities that differ radically from our society's. We will, as Marian Wright Edelman writes in *The Measure of Our Success*, "love our children more than we fear each other and our perceived or real external enemies."

Business meetings: This will not be easy. When we set our church budgets or plan our worships or our outreach, who speaks for the children? Just as children cannot vote in our political elections, they usually do not attend our congregational business meetings or meet with our deacon boards. We do not all have a Kristin Neufeld Epp (page 3) or a Martha Martin (page 6) in our midst. Or if we do, we may not listen to them.

If nothing else, let us listen to Jesus. Put his words on your bulletin boards, on your bathroom mirror at home, at your desk. Let his words remind you that the reign of God is different from the reign of this world. It is an upside-down kingdom.

In welcoming children and laying his hands on them to bless them, Jesus was acting against the laws and mores of his day. Children are powerless, while we like to exercise whatever power we have. Yet Jesus calls us to be like a child, not dependent on our own power but open to receiving the power of God.

Jesus was not romanticizing children. They are not sinless angels. They can be mean and hurtful to others. But they learn these behaviors from us adults.

Kristin repeats a belief held by many Anabaptists when she says that children are basically good. And when they are loved they tend to behave more lovingly.

There are not many as gifted as Kristin in relating to children. Nevertheless, we are all called—by Jesus—to welcome and defend children. Whether we are parents, teachers, uncles, aunts or brothers and sisters in the church, we have much to offer—and to learn from—children. We have the opportunity to bless them, and they can teach us about receiving the reign of God. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

A risky mission of mercy / p. 10

Reflections on death from a war zone / p. 11

A 10-year promise to serve overseas / p. 12

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 18
SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

OCT 8 96
ELKHART

THE CALL TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- A Jubilee journey (page 3)
- Should we eliminate Sunday school? (page 7)

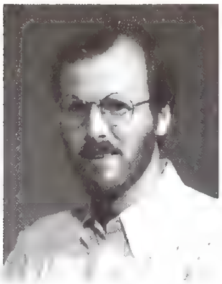
Prologue

This past Sunday (Sept. 8), Jeanne and Abri, my wife and daughter, were at the Western District Conference Women's Retreat at Camp Mennoscah. Ethan, my son, was at our congregation, where the fall quarter of Sunday school was beginning. I and three colleagues from our offices were at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan., to do a presentation about dismantling racism.

Each of us, in our different contexts, were participating in Christian education. While Ethan used the Jubilee curriculum at our regular Sunday school, Jeanne and Abri learned in a different setting from the usual one on Sunday morning. And Lorraine Avenue Church was flexible enough to use its adult Sunday school hour for a presentation on a current topic.

This issue celebrates Christian education and calls us to commit ourselves more fully to this important work of the church.

Rosella Wiens Regier tells how she has ministered through Christian education (page 3), while Linda Cannell warns us not to take Sunday school lightly or neglect education at home (page 7).



For your own education, read the Bible study on page 10, the reflections on death (page 11) and the profile of David Pankratz and Janet Schmidt (page 12).

Any of these articles is a good starter for discussion by your Sunday school class or prayer group. *gh*

Next issue: Ministering to women overseas

Cover: Photo by Burton Buller

Contents

FEATURES

3 A Jubilee journey

The author tells of the gifts she has received through the years that have helped secure her call to work in Christian education.

7 Should we eliminate Sunday school?

We have forced the Sunday school to be what it was never designed to be—the primary agency for biblical instruction.

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters
10 Bible
11 Commentary
12 Profile
13 News
21 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

A *Jubilee* journey

GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Rosella Wiens Regier

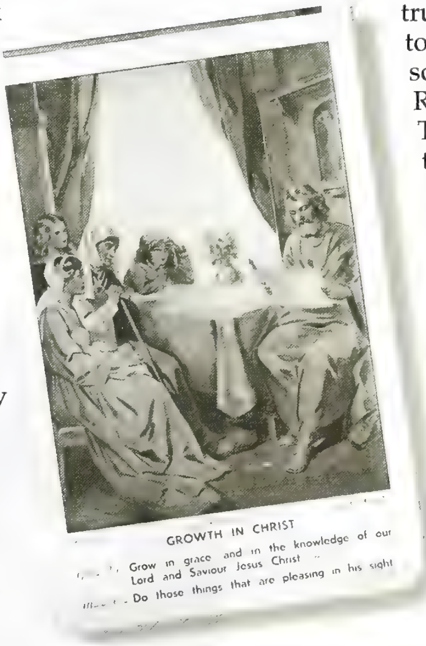
The author tells of the gifts she has received through the years that have helped secure her call to work in Christian education.

My journey with Christian education began as a child, raised in Sunday school. In 1950, I taught Sunday school for the first time in my life, and I experienced God's call to ministry. In the year 2000, the Anabaptist Curriculum Publishing Council will publish the last Jubilee summer course. For me that represents 50 years in Christian education. That year will be my celebration of Jubilee.

A gift of trust: My Christian education began at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan. My brother, Leonard Wiens, was a favorite early teacher, as was Susie Toevs—still alive and in her 90s at Inman.

I grew up on Cook picture rolls, with corresponding small pictures to take home. When I was a junior in high school, in 1950, my congregation recognized my potential gift of teaching, and asked me to teach a kindergarten Sunday school class—still using these picture rolls.

For years I hunted for picture rolls like these. One day Mildred Martens from Hesston, Kan., called to say she had retrieved some Sunday school things from the dumpster when their Aunt Marie and Uncle Ted Schmidt prepared for their auction. There in her car trunk, wrapped in a bath towel, were six Sunday school picture rolls. Right in my own church, Ted and Marie had kept these treasures from their Henderson, Neb., days.



GROWTH IN CHRIST

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Do those things that are pleasing in his sight

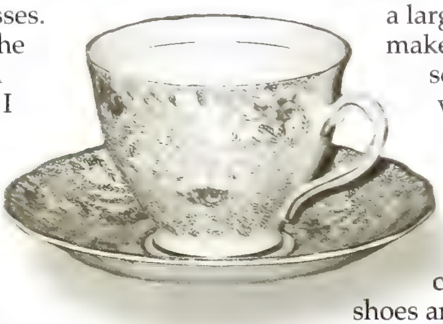
A gift of call: That same year, 1950, I was kneeling by my bedside in evening prayers. As I prayed, I seemed to be transported into another world. I stopped talking to God and listened. I saw a sign that read, "It is the way

Each year, on the first day of school, I pour a large cup of coffee and make the rounds to the schools. I watch parents videotaping their children down the block. I see teachers arriving with armloads of supplies. Children come in spanking new clothes. I pray for them and bless them. They don't know it, but I help them begin the school year.

the Master went. Should not the servant tread it still?" I saw people with arms outstretched, asking me to help.

I awakened from this trance—I call it a vision—and I knew I was called to be God's servant in ministry. Those lines haunted me for months. At church one Sunday we sang the hymn from which the words come: "Go, labor on, spend and be spent. / Thy joy to do the Father's will. / It is the way the Master went. / Should not the servant tread it still?" (*Mennonite Hymnal* 231)

A gift of money: I started at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., with just enough money for that first summer of classes. In preparation for the fall semester, Erwin Goering made sure I got a job as breakfast cook, a daily 5 to 8 a.m. shift. I remember the day he walked me out to the administration building steps and said, "Walk all the way down College Avenue. Knock on the last door on the left. Sam Goering is expecting you." Mr. Goering gave me a loan for that semester, and he arranged for me to work at 722 Main Street [General Conference Mennonite Church central offices] for the Board of Missions. A month later I had a paycheck. When I tried to pay off part of my loan, Sam Goering said, "No, no. You didn't understand. Each hour you work for the Board of Missions is your payment to me. Your job is to prepare yourself for ministry."



A gift of preparation: My first teaching job was at Turkey Creek school in McPherson County, Kan. Elmer Voth (now of North Newton) grinned when he said, "Miss Wiens, you got the job." I had a wonderful time teaching third, fourth and fifth graders there. Ray Juhnke and Alice Schmidt were the other teachers. It's still fun when my then-fourth grade students (now Newton residents) greet me. Kathryn Gaeddert always says, "Hello, Miss Wiens," and Dale Schrag salutes and says, "Hi, Teach."

In honor of the many years I taught school, each year I usher in the school year on the first day of school in Newton. Around 7 a.m. I pour a large cup of coffee and make the rounds to the schools. I watch parents videotaping their children down the block. I see teachers arriving with armloads of supplies. Children come in spanking new shoes and clothes. They walk confidently or clutch desperately to parents' hands. And I pray for them and bless them. They don't know it, but I help them begin the school year.

A gift of remembrances: Harold (my husband) and I left seminary in 1961. Winifred Waltner, the seminary president's wife, asked me to coffee, in appreciation for the work we'd done with the Hively Avenue Church youth group. When I left that morning, she asked me to kneel in her entry, and she placed her hands on my head to bless my coming ministry in Mississippi.

Then she looked around and said, "What can I give you so you'll remember me?" Her kitchen counter was ringed with all the teacups Erland, her husband, brought her from around the world. "Here's a cracked one from China," she said. "You'll never use it but you'll always remember me."

A gift of humility: Harold and I arrived in Gulfport, Miss., for what became a 10-year stint with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Commission on Home Ministries. That first year we asked the Bennett family over for dinner—my first time hosting an African-American family. I don't remember what I cooked, but when we sat down there must have been a dozen adult friends around the table. Harold said grace, and before I knew what was happening, everyone down the right side of the table—beginning with Mama Bennett—had

Say 'Jesus wept': *Mama and Papa Bennett from Mississippi in 1991*

Jubilee
OD NEWS

A gift to us all: *Rosella Wiens Regier introducing Jubilee materials*

responded with a Bible verse said from memory. It was my turn, and I, the missionary, drew a blank. Papa Bennett beside me touched my arm and said, "Say 'Jesus wept.'" I did as he said, and the verses proceeded back up the left side of the table. I never lived it down.

A gift of writing: In 1974 I wrote a quarter of Sunday school lessons for Foundation Series. It was then that Cornelia Lehn became one of my mentors. It had been a big project, and the due date was Dec. 1. Edna Dyck and I shared that deadline, so we decided to present our completed manuscripts to Nellie at the same time and in a ceremonial way. We tied them with red bows and carried a lighted candle. As we rounded the corner into her office, she was on the telephone. I can still hear her say, "I have to go now," as she hung up the phone without saying good-bye. We had a little celebration in honor of completed writing assignments. I understand the importance of meeting writer deadlines and celebration better today than I did then.

A gift of love: When our children were old enough, I went back to schoolteaching. One year, in the final month of school at Walton, Kan., I was teaching first and second grades.

The first graders had given a farewell party for the second graders, who would soon move to the room down the hall. A week later, the second graders approached me. Could they give a thank-you party to the first graders for the farewell party? They knew I couldn't resist parties, and I agreed, on the condition that they plan it alone and on top of their classwork.

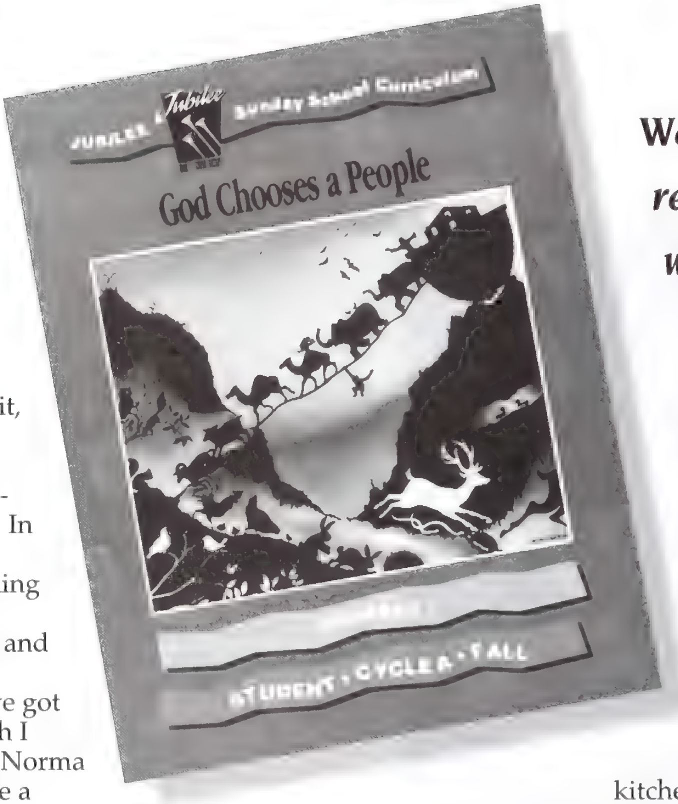
The day arrived and, while we were out for recess, the room was transformed: streamers, cupcakes, punch, a circle of chairs, games. I thought the party was over when Danielle Dirks asked me to sit in a low chair near the front. She presented me with a small candle "for teaching us." In the back, Mark Sargeant muttered, "I didn't know nuthin' about it." Apparently the girls forgot to tell the rest of the second graders.

Then Sarah Weber leaned in close with her hands behind her back. She looked into my eyes and whispered, "I love you, Mrs. Regier," and she showered my head with tablet paper hearts.

A gift of new direction: I had finished six wonderful years as director of children's ministries for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Harold and I were ready to take off for Europe on an Anabaptist Heritage Tour. Just days before our departure, Norma Johnson asked me out to breakfast. Over a second cup of coffee, she—for the Anabaptist Curriculum Publishing Council—invited me to become executive director of a yet-unnamed and new children's curriculum project. For once I was speechless. After all, I had represented the General Conference and Commission on Education on the curriculum planning council and the search of a director. I knew nothing of this plan.

At first, I didn't know if I was up to this gigantic undertaking. Was this opportunity for ministry too much for me? Wisely, Norma asked me to postpone a decision. What she said was, "Call me from Zurich." That was heady stuff.

I talked to our children. They said,



We are co-creators with God, recognizing God's action in our world so that we can create.

"Go for it, Mom." Harold was supportive. In the intervening weeks I thought and prayed. When we got to Zurich I phoned Norma and gave a tentative yes.

It has become increasingly important that it was at Zurich—the site of many other and early Anabaptist beginnings—where I also made an important decision.

A gift of confidence: I began my Jubilee employment in January 1991. Almost from the start, Laurence Martin became my mentor. He dreams dreams and sees visions. He would begin a sentence with, "What if we were to … " and he'd be off, spinning out a plan, formulating it as he went. The only problem was that for him the idea was as good as done. Laurence Martin believed in me. He taught me a lot about hope and courage and trust and dreaming big.

A gift of an angel: One time in Kitchener, Ont., after an all-day meeting, three of us drove out to dinner. Sandra Schiedel dropped me off back at the Conrad Grebel College campus, where I had left my rental car. It was late, and she said she'd wait to make sure my car started. It didn't. I had left the lights on.

Sandra had jumper cables in her car, but neither of us knew how to use them. At that moment we heard the pounding of feet down a stairway nearby and infectious laughter. Three angels in white—Amish kitchen workers—magically surrounded my car.

"Car won't start?" said one, while another took the cables and explained how to use them. The third parked her car an inch from mine, while the first angel got under the hood and barked out starting orders. When the car started, a mighty cheer arose. I looked up to see a sea of male students, who happened to be passing through, surrounding the scene, giving the angels a round of applause. The angel at my window gave me this word: "Whatever you do, don't stop the engine. Don't stop for a red light or nuthin'. Keep going."

A gift of writers: Three authors have been particularly influential in my life with Jubilee.

Sonja Stewart, Reformed Church professor at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Mich., wrote *Young Children and Worship* together with Jerome Berryman, an Episcopal canon in Houston. Sonja is a wonderful biblical storyteller. I remember her simple statement about children and faith: "We want children to fall in love with God."

In the book *Fashion Me a People,* Maria Harris explains the settings for Christian education in ways that touched our Jubilee planning groups. Especially important to me is her concept that we "are co-creators with God," recognizing God's action in our world so that we can create.

I learned to know Jerome Berryman when I went to watch him work with children at Christ's Church Episcopal Church in Houston. Once I attended a Eucharist he performed. I knelt at the rail, took my wafer and promptly ate it. When he served the cup, in which I was to dip my wafer, he blessed me anyway and many times afterward he's called me the "Anabaptist who didn't know how to do Episcopal Communion."

A gift of curriculum: I met Jim Juhnke, Bethel College professor, on the street here in Newton this summer. In his hands he held the Junior Youth Jubilee, Cycle B, Summer Broadly-Graded Student Leaflet. "Rosella, what a gift you are giving our children," he said. He realized there is story after story about our forebears in six Anabaptist denominations—about 40 stories. "But you missed it with Dirk Willems," he said. "This guy died saving his enemy and you don't even tell that part." I panicked inside. Then it became clear: The center inserts separated the end from the beginning of the story. Thank goodness, it was all there.

Jim was relieved, and so grateful for this witness to faith that children are getting this summer. Jubilee is a gift to me and to us all.

Rosella Wiens Regier is executive director of Curriculum Project, Jubilee: God's Good News. She is a member of Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Should we eliminate Sunday school?

We have forced the Sunday school to be what it was never designed to be—the primary agency for biblical instruction.

Linda Cannell

Once upon a time, in a country not so far away, concerned people decided to develop an organization through which they could teach values and truth to their young. They called this organization a "school," and it met for one hour on Sunday mornings in a place they called a church.

Church leaders believed that this school could do what was needed. Many parents relaxed their obligation to be the primary communicators of Bible knowledge and biblical values to their young. Many church leaders assigned the church's teaching ministry and much of its outreach to the Sunday school.

For many years, volunteers served this organization with great excitement and dedication. They persevered in spite of minimal training. For many years, parents looked back on their years in the Sunday school, remembered the love and friendliness of their teachers, the contests, the picnics and decided that their children would have the same experience. Few carefully evaluated the extent to which Sunday school contributed to competence in biblical understanding the practice of the Christian faith.

The years passed. As long as the values of society more or less paralleled the values of the church, Sunday schools were reasonably effective. However, today's society seldom looks to the church as its source for standards and values. Consequently, the Sunday school is even less effective as an agency for Bible teaching and Christian nurture.

Bible knowledge: It is becoming apparent that many (if not most) young people and adults in our churches have limited knowledge and inadequate understanding of Scripture. It is not unusual for first-year students in our Bible colleges to score poorly on simple tests of Bible knowledge. We have forced the Sunday school to be what it was never designed to be—the primary agency for biblical instruction. Because of this we encourage biblical illiteracy to the point where those we ask to teach have little real knowledge of the Scriptures themselves.

It is not appropriate to lay the blame for the development of biblical illiteracy at the feet of the Sunday school teacher. Rather, consider the many factors that have contributed to an impending crisis in the church's teaching ministry:

- Parents and church leaders generally consider Sunday school to be the church's primary agency for teaching the Bible. However, even if people had a full hour of "teaching" on Sunday morning, they would only receive 52 hours of instruction in a year. It is reasonable to estimate that half the hour is given to "open session," taking attendance and offering, "getting acquainted"—all worthwhile activities. This, however, leaves us with approximately 26 hours of Bible instruction. Special days, rehearsals, absenteeism can reduce the number of hours to 20. Given the fact that many who teach are unskilled and limited in Bible knowledge themselves, let us lower the figure to 15 hours of Bible instruction in a year. It is conceivable that those attending Sunday school are receiving approximately 10 to 15 hours of effective Bible instruction in a year. Even 52 hours a year would be inadequate in the light of the thousands of hours of other stimuli affecting our people.

Middle-American values: The fact that many publishers target their materials to an average teacher who is inexperienced, handles concepts and language at a grade 8 level, often spends no more than 30 minutes per week preparing a lesson for Sunday, and who lives in a small town in rural North America limits the effectiveness of curriculum for deepening biblical understanding and practice of the Christian faith. The lesson writer must design questions, teaching methodology and phrase the content in such a way that this average teacher will not be frustrated or confused. Often the themes selected reflect middle-American values, which can be problematic for churches in other situations.

Before we jump on the publishers, however, let us realize that we in the church have created this average teacher by ineffective training, inadequate attention to the variety that can be part of the teaching environment, and enlistment that often comes out of desperation to fill a program slot.

continued on next page

Many (if not most) young people and adults in our churches have limited knowledge and inadequate understanding of Scripture.

- In spite of the fact that the preschool and adult age groups comprise the largest areas in most Sunday schools, many churches still consider children through junior high to be the primary focus of Sunday school ministry. This pattern is severely limiting the effectiveness of the church's teaching ministry.

Important foundations can be laid through preschool ministries on Sunday and through the week. The large number of options available for adult education and development in and through the church have not been tapped by local churches. Churches can develop adult ministries that will attract and challenge their adults. Ministry to children and youth would be strengthened considerably if churches took the time to plan for effective preschool and adult ministries.

- Family and/or intergenerational groupings tend to get lost in the departmentalization of our Sunday schools. The family night was one attempt to rectify this omission, but the family night did not, on the whole, provide opportunities for families to meet together for conversation, study or worship. Some churches have discovered intergenerational curriculum. In many settings this elective experience has proven an exciting alternative—if leaders are well-trained. Some churches are releasing their Sunday evenings for family experiences at the church or in neighborhood homes. Some churches have incorporated the family cluster model where three to five families covenant together and share many experiences of conversation and learning together.

Families need help if they are to provide effective faith experiences for their young. Many parents have lost the art of conversation with their children and feel uncomfortable talking with them about Scripture and faith. Resources are available to churches seeking to develop family alternatives in the teaching ministry.

- Church leaders seldom think creatively or widely about the church's teaching ministry. This is not necessarily the fault of the church leader. However, the tendency is to believe that the published curriculum is adequate for the development of ever increasing maturity in biblical understanding. It is not. The Sunday school publishers do not intend the curricula to be the final answer for the church's teaching ministry. Church leaders, because of their lack of understanding of what curriculum is—and what it is not—have forced the curriculum to do what it was never designed to do.

Ministry to children and youth would be strengthened considerably if churches took the time to plan for effective preschool and adult ministries.

Bible instruction: Should we not include the entire program of the church when we think about Bible teaching? Consider a typical week in the life of a church—just from the standpoint of Bible instruction. On Sunday morning the people get a fragment in Sunday school. They attend the morning service and hear a sermon from another portion of Scripture. If the church meets on Sunday evening they will hear from another portion of the Bible. If they attend a weeknight study or prayer meeting, they will be exposed to another section of Scripture.

Most of the regular attenders of the various church programs have no way to link the many fragments of Scripture into larger concepts, truths or principles that they can use to guide their lives and thoughts. It is possible to integrate the various opportunities the church provides for biblical instruction and Christian growth, but church leaders will have to give time to thinking and planning.

Do we eliminate the Sunday school from our church's programming? In the years to come, the school on Sunday may indeed change to a school on Monday evenings or Tuesday mornings or Sunday evenings. Many, however, still find the Sunday school a valid experience. For it to remain a valid experience, churches must recapture what has made the Sunday school movement effective—its ability to change. What is good can become even better.

Linda Cannell has taught Christian education at Winnipeg Bible College and Ontario Theological Seminary, Willowdale, Ont.

Letters

GOOD FRIEND ON COVER

Thank you for your Aug. 13 issue in which our church community is highlighted. Thanks to Hugo Neufeld for the article, "Do We Welcome the Marginalized in Our Worship?" (page 3). I was particularly thrilled to see our good friend Darcy (Dee) on the front cover. *Marilyn Koval, Hamilton, Ont.*

PILOT PROJECT

Thanks for the feature article in the Aug. 13 issue on being more inclusive of people on the margins. Our congregation is participating in a "Welcoming Congregation" pilot project in the Lehigh Valley sponsored by the Interfaith Disabilities Coalition. *Jim S. Amstutz, West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

THIS ONE'S FOR ORGANIZING THE CHURCH PICNIC. THAT ONE IS FOR MY STINT ON THE BUILDING COMMITTEE, AND THIS REALLY BIG ONE IS FOR LASTING THE ENTIRE YEAR AS A JUNIOR HIGH SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.
IF THE CHURCH GAVE MEDALS

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

WOMEN IN COLOMBIA

Santafe de Bogota—A macho culture is at the root of the problems in our society, and women are not willing to work at changing that reality, said a male social worker at a parent-teacher meeting at a high school in Colombia.

How ironic, I thought, looking around at the approximately 200 mothers and only three fathers present at the meeting.

As my husband, Bryan, and I lead workshops in Mennonite churches in Colombia, women share their stories of abuse.

One woman from the Girardot church, which has primarily female members, told us, "My husband was abusive. He would not allow me to work outside the home. He spent his paycheck on alcohol. We could not pay the rent. We were always hungry. I left because of my children, and now we live with my parents." Others echoed her experience.

Many Colombian Mennonite women are searching for solutions to the problems they face. Female teenagers and young adults flock to workshops on dating and sexuality because they are unhappy. They tell us that if they don't submit to the traditional patterns, they may never marry. Mothers and grandmothers fill our churches, fasting and praying for their families.

Recently we prayed for more than 20 men, many of them alcoholics and abusers, whose wives attend the La Mesa church.

The women clamor to God with a faith I have never before witnessed. Women seek out other women. As one of the few female Mennonite church leaders who regularly visits the churches, I do a lot of listening to my sisters in faith. I pray with them. Yet I feel extremely helpless. My God, how long must these women live in such misery? *Julie Moyer Suderman, former mission worker in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church, who now lives in Kitchener, Ont.*

RETREAT IN HONG KONG

Hong Kong—The China Area Workers' retreat drew together long-term workers from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan for worship and fellowship in Beijing. The worship times moved us to tears. Amid the laughter and tears we felt less alone. We were reminded that others share our call and burden for the Chinese quarter of the world's population.

Reflecting on the ominous divisions between the political systems in which we work, we were aware the church needs to go first in demonstrating reconciliation in a part of the world that could easily be the next tinderbox. Our common call to the Chinese world ties us together across the political barriers and the styles of mission we are permitted to use. As we met we reflected a dream that one day, perhaps in the near future, the church would be able to have sisters and brothers involved in such a retreat. This retreat was prophetic. Even though the governments are far apart, our brothers and sisters in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong have the same Lord and are part of the same body.

We were aware that our different settings demand a variety of approaches. We must be creative in reaching out to people. Whether in teaching, pastoring, serving or being evangelists, we all share a passion for Jesus that we express in different ways. We grew in our resolve to be open to God's Spirit moving us to try new things in mission.

Many of us with long-term commitments to serve the Chinese are now on teams shrunk to just a few people in our respective countries. Having a joint retreat allowed us a glimpse of the bigger picture, seeing others working by our side just across the human borders and geographical boundaries. What a privilege to work with such a great bunch of people, even if our times together are so limited. *Tim Sprunger, COM worker in Hong Kong*

A risky mission of mercy

Jesus' love for persecutors and persecuted in Romans 12:14-16

Steve Mosher

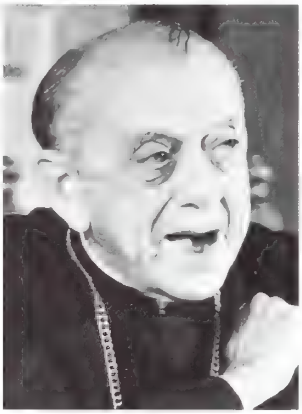
The faith of Jesus emphasizes a risky mission of mercy, risky because it strikes at the root causes of poverty: oppression by the religious, idolatrous rich. Dom Helder Camara, former archbishop in Brazil, once said, "When I give food to the poor they call me a saint; when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist."

In the Philippines, Bishop Antonio Fortich grew up in a wealthy sugar-growing family. Later, after seeing the terrible poverty and repression of sugar workers, he urged the landowners to share their wealth and supported the workers in their organizing. Fortich strongly supported land reform so that workers could own their own land. As a result, huge signs were hung on the streets near Fortich's house, denouncing communist priests and sisters.

As Paul's readers continue Jesus' mission, they will be persecuted. Prayerful patience in the midst of such opposition must bless opponents, not curse them (Romans 12:14; see 12:12). The faith of Jesus calls for blessing and praying for one's enemies (Luke 6:28; see Matthew 5:44). Paul clearly uses the teaching of Jesus about loving one's enemies. The way of Jesus' faith is to love and do good even to persecutors. Whenever Paul faces cursing, persecution and slander because of his apostolic mission, he responds with blessing, endurance and kindness (1 Corinthians 4:9-13).

Persecuted followers of Jesus also need to remain united. Members of the one worldwide body of Christ must be sensitive to the different situations of one another. When some are rejoicing in a certain experience, even in suffering, the rest should also rejoice (Romans 12:15; see 5:2-3; 12:12; Philippians 2:17-18; Colossians 1:24; Matthew 5:12; Acts 5:41; 1 Peter 4:13). When some are mourning, the others should sympathize with their sorrow (Romans 12:15; see 1 Corinthians 12:26; Matthew 5:4; Luke 6:21; John 16:20-22; James 5:13). If the persecuted are to stand firm, they need the strength that comes from struggling side by side for the faith of Jesus (Philippians 1:27).

Death on a cross: Unity despite persecution requires having the same attitude toward one another (Romans 12:16). All must share the mind of Christ in such situations (Philippians 2:2, 5). The poor, persecuted Christians should not be looked down on by other Christians (Romans 12:16). Instead the humiliated ones should be honored more highly (compare Romans 12:10, Philippians 2:3). The faith of Jesus led him to humble himself and become an obedient servant, even unto a shameful death on a cross (Philippians 2:7-8). If Paul's readers are to share that same faith, they must neither avoid nor despise those who are suffering as Jesus suffered (Romans 12:16).


RNS

"When I give food to the poor they call me a saint; when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist."

Dom Helder Camara

Such suffering ones might seem to be the least of God's favorites. The truth is that receiving God's final favor depends on how one treats them. When Jesus sent disciples out on mission assignments filled with hardship, he said that those who did not receive them or give them practical support would be judged (Matthew 10:14-15). On the other hand, everyone who received such disciples or apostolic missionaries also received Jesus, the one who sent them (Matthew 10:40). Even giving a mere cup of water to thirsty missionaries would show support for them and their mission (Matthew 10:42). There was both solidarity between Jesus and his disciples and between the disciples and those who received them. By doing God's will, as defined by Jesus, they were part of Jesus' family, his brothers and sisters (Matthew 12:48-50).

At the end of the age, when all peoples will be judged, the basis will be their treatment of Jesus' brothers and sisters (Matthew 25:40). Those brothers or sisters are least in the world's eyes, due to mission hardships like hunger, thirst, strange places, lack of clothing, sickness and imprisonment. Yet they are in fact Jesus' own contact with the world's peoples (Matthew 25:32-40). Those who unite with them and welcome them with food, drink, clothing and companionship will be judged as true sheep of Jesus' flock (like the jailer in Acts 16:30-34). But those who refuse them will be judged as goats who never really knew Jesus (Matthew 25:41-46).

Paul knows how important the support of others is during difficult times. He knows the disappointment of being dishonored and abandoned by others during his imprisonments (see Philippians 1:17; 2 Timothy 1:15; 4:10-16). Thus, followers of Jesus should seek out such suffering ones in order to show love (Romans 12:16; see 12:13).

Jesus' parable in Matthew 25:31-46 teaches that those who continue the apostolic work of proclaiming Jesus' faith will also follow Jesus' example of experiencing poverty and suffering. In that context, those representing Jesus are called not so much to help the poor as to become poor and outcast themselves as part of their world mission.

Steve Mosher is a full-time writer and attends San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Church. This article is excerpted with permission from the book God's Power, Jesus' Faith and World Mission: A Study in Romans, *just published by Herald Press.*

Commentary

Reflections on death from a war zone

A mission worker in Burundi sees death around her every day and must think about it.

Suzy Yoder

Although Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) clearly stated the risks of service in Burundi, I didn't want to believe that part of my job would be to face daily the possibility of death. Yet this personal awareness of dying gives emotional reality to our ability to support Burundians who face the possibility of their deaths or their family's. The massacres in the hills and the stories people tell reveal human suffering beyond any I have endured.

With the Burundian government displeased with the international community calling for dialogue among all sides, we at MCC have to face the fact that we may not be welcome here much longer. The messages are mixed: Sometimes we are accused of siding with the Hutus, sometimes with the Tutsis. Sometimes Burundians condemn us for supporting negotiations; other times they commend us for our support of groups working for peace and reconciliation.

Even though people don't glare at us in the streets and usually greet us in a friendly manner, death is on my mind. We may not be targets, but we could be killed in cross fire or in an ambushed vehicle.

The same is true at home. However, there the denial of the risk of death was easier. I didn't face the reality of my own death nearly so often.

I don't think it is morbid to face the possibility; in fact, this working through the possibility of death may be an important way I have been changed by serving in Burundi. Facing the threat of death can inspire us to evaluate our relationships, decisions and activities.

Thoughts of death come daily, but the fears are usually short-lived. Once, when a grenade exploded in the street, my first reaction was an adrenaline rush. Then I looked around, listened for more and noted, "I am still alive."

Soon I was able to move on to other things, as Burundians do. After an attack, it is amazing how quickly people begin going to the market, walking to work, taking the minibus to the city—just as though nothing horrible has happened.

Delivered up: What thoughts sustain me here in a tense war-torn country where I have glimpsed death too often for comfort? Karl Johnson, a missionary in Burundi for 40 years, was advising us how to cope in a violent crisis. He said he is helped by remembering that one of two things will happen: "Either I will be delivered out (evacuated or rescued) or I will be delivered up (taken to heaven)."

As I was accompanying a young Burundian Roman Catholic student who didn't feel safe walking alone, she explained her approach to coping with the threat of death.

"When my heart is pure and my relationship to God and other human beings is right, then I am OK. I feel more confident and I am at peace about whatever happens to me. When I can maintain that attitude, I am even ready to die. Whether I live or die doesn't really matter. When confronted with violent death, I want to believe God will be with me."

I will try my best to escape death because I love life and find the world full of interesting people and places. I still love to learn and want to alleviate pain wherever I can. I can count on my human instincts when it comes to my trying really hard to live.

There are miraculous stories of people receiving God's protection, which I do ask for. But I realize I cannot order God around, and as God "loans me more life," as Burundians like to say, I am grateful. People do pray for protection and are not granted it. I have told my husband that if I die here and he is still alive, I want to be buried in Burundi in solidarity with Christians here who have seen too much violent death.

When I was young, I remember wanting the Lord to delay his return so that I could experience life on earth for a while. Now I beg for his return to end all this suffering.

Suzy Yoder, Davidson, N.C., is an MCC Burundi worker, affiliated with Davidson Friends Meeting and Oakhill Mennonite Church, Winston-Salem, N.C.

John Gray (MCC)

Death is all around: *Women from the hills near Kibimba, Burundi, receive sleeping mats. Some recipients fled their homes due to the ongoing fighting that is tearing Burundi apart. MCC worker Susan Seitz helped arrange for purchase of mats from Burundian women's groups.*

Profile

A 10-year promise to serve overseas

This married couple made a plan and asked others to help them keep to it.

John Longhurst

Many people think they should do a term of overseas service with a church agency. Some even promise themselves to do it "someday." But for Winnipeggers Janet Schmidt and David Pankratz, "someday" wasn't good enough—not only did they set a date, they asked their friends to help them keep their promise.

The strategy worked. This month Janet, 41, and David, 42, leave for a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Zambia.

It all started in 1986, when the newly married couple agreed that they wanted to serve overseas as volunteers. "We decided to set a 10-year plan," says Janet. "By 1996 we wanted to be headed overseas."

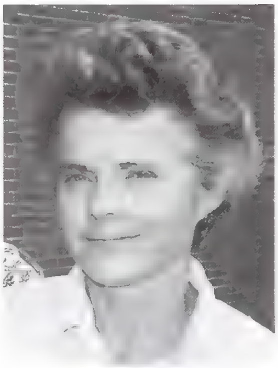
In order to make sure they kept their promise, they told friends and family about the decision. "We put it in every Christmas letter," says David. "It was like a countdown—nine, eight, seven years to go. It was a way of asking people to keep us accountable."

As part of the plan the couple wanted to acquire skills that would be useful overseas. David was working toward becoming a certified general accountant, while Janet obtained her master's in education. David went on to work as accountant at Providence College in Otterburne, Man., and, since 1990, as accountant and financial controller for Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

"It would be easy to stay home now for the sake of our careers. That's why our public commitment to go overseas is so helpful."

David Pankratz

But things turned out differently for Janet. The same year they were married she started volunteering at the MCC Manitoba-supported Mediation Services. Ten years later she had not only gone on to help direct the organization but also has become one of the foremost experts on conflict resolution in Canada today.



"Some said we were planning our lives too completely or leaving God out of it. But our desire to serve God is what caused us to make this commitment."

Janet Schmidt

For the couple, members of Winnipeg's River East Mennonite Brethren Church, going overseas for three years is a risky career move. "We don't know what effect it will have on our careers," says Janet. "Will there be jobs for us when we get back? It's a risk—no doubt about it."

But, David adds, "we didn't want our careers to prevent us from going overseas. It would be easy to stay home now for the sake of our careers. That's why our public commitment to go overseas is so helpful."

A 10-year plan isn't for everyone, they say. "But for us, it kept us focused, kept up our interest in serving overseas," says Janet.

They admit that not everyone greeted their decision positively. "Some said we were planning our lives too completely or leaving God out of it," says Janet. "But our desire to serve God is what caused us to make this commitment."

Adds David, "We like to think that we were putting ourselves on a road where God could use us, and [we were] responding to opportunities as they arose."

The opportunity they chose will find Janet serving at the African Council of Churches-sponsored Mindolo Training Centre in Kitwe, Zambia, where she will be teaching conflict resolution. David will assist local people with issues related to accounting, such as translating North American accounting methods into African contexts.

"We've seen too many people say they wanted to serve overseas but then never do it," David says. "We didn't want that to happen to us."

John Longhurst works for Mennonite Central Committee Canada Communications in Winnipeg.

Do you know inspiring stories of people to share with our readers?

Contact us at
(316) 283-5100,
fax (316) 283-0454,
e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org

INTERESTED IN SERVICE?

Contact
Mennonite Voluntary Service
or
Commission on Overseas Mission
both at
P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

a Common Place

WHERE WE MEET
IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

SEPTEMBER 1996

Let's talk:

From making soap… to sheer fun!

Service "In the name of Christ"

Profile: More than a relief sale

From Saskatchewan to the Sahara

Mennonite
Central
Committee

We must "extend the table" to expand the family

by Ronald J.R. Mathies

A few months ago my wife, Gudrun, and I visited the relief sale in New Hamburg, Ont., one of many held across the continent. The atmosphere was a delightful and exuberant mixture of country fair and family reunion. The many threads and colors that make up each quilt on auction symbolize diverse people coming together for a common task. The circle of work and worship was completed the next day as the area church members gathered on Pentecost Sunday to celebrate the transforming power of the Spirit's presence.

This issue of *a Common Place* celebrates the extended household of faith that is MCC's supporting Mennonite and Brethren in Christ community. In North America this consists of: church conferences that guide MCC; congregations that nurture and encourage some 900 workers in 50 countries (more than 15,000 workers have been assigned since 1920); some 30,000 volunteers in shops sending proceeds to MCC, relief sales, Houses Against Hunger, meat canning and other activities. It also includes the much larger host of witnesses who provide financial support through congregations, and who uphold MCC's work in prayer.

Ownership of MCC by the church is strong, and accountability to the church is high. Each conference, congregation and member has a stake in the MCC expression of faith in common witness. Given the anguish of our hurting world, it is not surprising research has shown that a ministry of compassionate service is the most visible and inviting face of the church today.

Throughout its history MCC has been "extending the table" in order to expand the family. When my parents and their families were fragile, helpless and beyond hope in Russia in the 1920s, the church through MCC was there to provide food, nurture and new opportunities. When my wife's family was destitute in war-torn Europe in the 1940s, the church through MCC was there at the refugee camps, to offer safe haven and a new life.

The need and opportunity to extend the family continues. Over the past 17 years, supporting churches in Canada have welcomed more than 10,000 refugees into their midst, at a cost of over $50 million. In the United States, MCC is developing a new model of service unit, in an urban center with Mennonite churches of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The unit will include workers from the community and from other parts of MCC's constituency. This model of working together in service comes out of a commitment to the church's role in breaking barriers between and building bridges across racial divides. Stories from each country in which MCC serves echo the sentiments expressed by Bolivian friends to departing workers, "No one has loved us like you. No one has cried with us like you. No one has cared for us like you."

An exciting challenge ahead will be to search for new forms of authentic kinship with the global family of faith. The 21st century will see the global church, especially the church of the southern hemisphere, coming into prominence. MCC's role will be to continue to walk with, to be shaped by, to open doors for and to struggle together to make this extended family more of a reality. We will need to do this, in the words of Robert Wuthnow, by gathering a "community of memory" of people who understand the pain of the world. We must develop a "common story" based not on ethnicity, but on a common walk.

We celebrate our supporting faith community! Come and join together in local and global service "In the name of Christ." ■

Ronald J.R. Mathies began as MCC executive director July 1, 1996.

What do you think? We want to hear from you. Please send your comments, questions, beefs and bouquets to Editor, *a Common Place* via:

MAIL
21 South 12th Street,
PO Box 500, Akron
PA 17501-0500.

FAX
(717) 859-2171

E-MAIL
DLF@MCC.org

Please include your name and address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. *a Common Place* will not always have space to print all letters received. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not of the publication.

E-MAIL FOR GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE
mailbox@MCC.org

MCC'S WORLD WIDE WEB HOMEPAGE ADDRESS
http://www.mennonitecc.ca/mcc/

a Common Place **invites readers to meet the people Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers have come to know, and to search for the strength and hope we share as children of God. *a Common Place* promises readers an honest look at life on the edge of survival, trustworthy information about the events of our world and practical ways of working together to make a difference.**
a Common Place **is published by MCC, a relief, service and community development agency that strives for peace, justice and the dignity of all people by sharing its experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ. Our point of view is shaped by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ faith tradition and some 900 workers serving in 50 countries in food production, health, education, job creation, refugee assistance and conciliation. MCC is sponsored by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.**

a Common Place

September 1996 Insert

features

4 **Let's talk**

From making soap to sheer fun
Service "In the name of Christ"

Service "In the name of Christ" comes in many forms. Supporters of and volunteers with MCC talk about their motivation.

TEN THOUSAND
VILLAGES

6 Name is changing,
but not the mission

SELFHELP Crafts of the World will become Ten Thousand Villages as of September 20, 1996. "We want to give a clear, consistent message about who we are and what we do," says Paul Myers, SELFHELP Crafts director.

7 **Profile:**

Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale

More than a relief sale: It's a festival!

Organizers of this Winnipeg, Man., event believe raising money for charity doesn't have to be boring. Articles by Gladys Terichow and photos by Bruce Hildebrand.

12 "To dance in the midst of suffering"

**Responding to human need
in the former Yugoslavia**

Refugees need more than just "the basics." We must allow people to restore their self-identity, to maintain their sense of pride and dignity and to hold onto their culture, says Zagreb MCC worker, Amy Gopp. Articles by Amy Gopp and Mark Jantzen.

departments

2 **Guest editorial**
by Ronald J.R. Mathies

11 **Fieldnotes**

14 **Make a difference:
Children here are "WOWed"
into service**
by Susan Miller Balzer

**From
Saskatchewan
to the Sahara**
by Pearl Sensenig

On the cover: **Many hands, joined in service, form the foundation of MCC's work around the world. MCC photo by Jim King.**

a Common Place **editor-in-chief is Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker. Editor is Deborah Fast. Designers are Michael Eby-Good and Julie Kauffman.**
Direct inquiries to Editor, *a Common Place*. See mail, e-mail and phone information on page 2.

From making soap… to sheer fun

Service "In the name of Christ"

Service "In the name of Christ" comes in many forms. MCC relies on the commitment and energy of thousands of people. This selection of responses to our question, "Why do you volunteer with or support MCC?" tells the story of the commitment and creativity of those people, and the reasons why they do what they do.

My first contact with MCC was several years ago at a relief sale in New Hamburg, Ont. I was amazed to see people working together to help others, instead of complaining about how bad things were. Since then I have helped Old Order Amish farmers establish an organic shared agriculture community project, and worked to bring urban and rural Mennonites together to raise money for famine relief.

Despair and cynicism may not be the most dangerous afflictions we face today, but they often seem to be the most pervasive. Working with MCC has been an antidote to these, for me. I am not solving all of the world's problems, but I am helping to make a real difference in some people's lives.

Jamie MacDonald
Kitchener, Ont.

Why do we make soap for shipment overseas, and what keeps us enthusiastic? First, it is a fascinating process to combine melted, cleaned fat and lye; it changes rapidly to a creamy consistency, and then to a thicker mass ready for pouring into molds. Three simple ingredients—fat, caustic soda and water—combined in proper proportions yield an excellent product.

My husband, John, and I collect fat from retirement homes, schools and individuals. It is much better to use the fat to make soap than to have it clogging people's arteries!

We continue to make soap because we know that in many parts of the world soap cannot be bought or is extremely expensive. As long as the Lord gives us strength we will continue to turn fat, which would otherwise be thrown away, into a much-needed product MCC distributes to our brothers and sisters around the world.

Arlene H. Hess
Lancaster, Pa.

I learned about MCC through news reports and at Goshen College, where I was part of the Hispanic Ministries program. I felt MCC's presence in my urban Chicago community would be a good thing, and I eventually became a one-year service intern—as interim pastor—in my congregation, Iglesia Christian Getsemani. This gives me a unique opportunity to do what I love, in my home community. I focus on making local residents aware of our church's presence, and encouraging their involvement, I preach and I visit church members. I teach a lot about Anabaptist history and theology, which has renewed the faith of some church members. I feel this is my calling.

David Araugo
Chicago, Ill.

My husband told me about MCC six years ago, and since then I have read about volunteers around the world. I am struck that so much work is done without pretension or boasting, but with compassion. I see the mission, action without words, as the path of Christ, and I wanted to make a difference in my life by contributing to society,. I began volunteering at the Washington office, and now I am a Summer Service worker. Every day I learn more about stewardship through helping others, bringing clarity to hard-to-understand legislation and working to change legislation that hurts those less fortunate.

Mitra K. Battan
Washington, D.C.

I support MCC "In the name of Christ" because of their financial accountability, integrity of heart, willingness to learn from those who are different and for sheer fun.

I have been impressed by MCC's low administrative overhead, which enables a high percentage of gifts to reach needy people. And, I have learned about integrity of heart from Helen Stork, a SELFHELP Crafts of the World shop owner in Ventura, Calif., who reflected a genuine partnership with artisans.

As I travelled in the United States with Habitat for Humanity in 1991, I built homes with many male Mennonite volunteers. Most were initially quite reluctant to work with our all-female construction crew, but I was encouraged by their growing willingness to share both their skills and their tools.

Last but not least, sheer fun. At the annual West Coast quilt auction and relief sale, I relish German foods I haven't enjoyed since childhood and have, as a quilter, been inspired by others' practical artistry. Last year I even donated a quilt!

"In the name of Christ."—above all else, that's why this believer (current label: Episcopalian) is an MCC supporter.

Jo Ellen Heil
Ventura, Calif.

Recently, while packing bandages for shipment overseas, I discovered a small note tucked in a box: "I have rolled and finished all available sheets into bandages as of May 11," it read. This was clearly not an earth-shaking announcement, but behind it was a sense of urgency to fulfill the assignment.

Moses, many centuries ago, had an assignment from his Lord. Moses hesitated because he didn't think he could complete the job. But God asked, "What is that in your hand?" There was nothing earth-shaking—a staff, that was all.

With folks living longer and better than any previous generation, we have to ask, "Have I rolled and finished all available sheets?" And so, I spend most Mondays working at the MCC warehouse in North Newton, Kan.,—always on the lookout for those little notes.

Will Just
Wichita, Kan.

No hands but ours

This 13-minute video follows the chain of caring hands that provide material resources such as school kits and comforters to people in need. It introduces volunteers in Canada and the United States, and interviews those who received material assistance in Bosnia and the Ukraine as well as Rwandan refugees in Bukavu, Zaire. Contact your nearest MCC office (see page 15) for a free loan of this video.

Name is changing, but not the mission

SELFHELP Crafts of the World becomes Ten Thousand Villages

by Ten Thousand Villages
Information Department

"It is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil." (Ecclesiastes 3:13)

TEN THOUSAND
VILLAGES

The Ten Thousand Villages logo represents visually the organization's mission. The continuous line forming the buildings reminds us we are all linked as we live on this earth. The logo's cultural architecture represents homes of people with whom we work, in many cultures and places. Lit windows and doors speak of human beings sheltered there—people much like ourselves in many ways. The warm red color and hand-crafted look of the logo represent the materials and methods used to make the items marketed by Ten Thousand Villages.

SELFHELP Crafts of the World, an MCC program, will change its name to Ten Thousand Villages, effective September 20, 1996. The organization's mission remains the same, however—to help disadvantaged craftspeople provide food, adequate housing, health care and education for their families. Ten Thousand Villages will continue to provide vital, fair income to Third World people by selling their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America, says Paul Myers, SELFHELP Crafts director. The organization works with artisans who would otherwise be unemployed or under-employed.

"Helping people earn an income is one way for us to serve the poor," says Myers.

Why the name change?

"We want to give a clear and consistent message about who we are, what we do, why we do it, who we do it with and how people can become involved," explains Myers. SELFHELP Crafts store staff have frequently cited confusion about the name; stores have been perceived to be do-it-yourself crafts supply stores. Marketing experts suggest that a more inviting name will encourage sales, which in turn will provide more jobs for craftspeople.

For many craftspeople in the Third World, the village is where one's heart is—an important symbol of family, tradition and culture. In a mass-production-oriented world, villages are still a setting for creating authentic handicrafts. By selling these handicrafts in North America, Ten Thousand Villages helps these communities survive.

Over the next year many shops throughout North America will assume the new identity. ■

In the Njah-etuh village near Bamenda, Cameroon, a women's group of 63 members weave traditional raffia baskets and bags. Njah-etuh is near the end of a dirt road high up in the mountains. Women normally walk several kilometers to buy food and other essentials. Making baskets and bags is their only source of cash income. Their remote location makes marketing difficult; they are often undercut by basket makers closer to large towns. Orders from Ten Thousand Villages are very important to this group.

The women's theme song reflects a strong belief that by working together they are stronger than the sum total of all as individuals: "Njah-etuh women, how are you living? We are together, we are living well, We are." ■

More than a relief sale:

It's a festival!

by Gladys Terichow

Raising money for charity doesn't have to be boring. Organizers of the Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale took this dictum to heart for the third year in a row, transforming part of a large scenic park at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers into a tent city June 14 and 15. Soon after the 14 colorful tents were set up, the aroma of home-cooked meals and the sounds of music, visiting and laughter filled the air.

"It is more than an auction and relief sale to raise money for MCC," says Harry Peters, chair of the 1996 planning committee. "It is a festival, a celebration of our faith and heritage." This year's name change—including the word, "festival"— reflects that celebration. The theme, "Welcome the children," focussed attention on MCC's work with some of the world's most needy people.

"More Mennonites live in Winnipeg than in any other urban center in the world," says Peter Peters, executive director of MCC Manitoba. "We needed an opportunity to work together." The Winnipeg sale started three years ago, to give Mennonites in this southern Manitoba city a chance to do just that.

The two-day event raises about $50,000 Cdn. each year for MCC relief and development work—and builds bridges between Mennonites and non-Mennonites. The sale's urban setting attracts not only local Mennonites, but also invites others to find out what MCC is all about.

Marlene Neustaedter, chair of the 1994 and 1995 sales, says it has been exciting to develop an MCC relief sale in an urban setting. The first challenge was finding an appropriate site, she recalls. The eventual choice—a recreation and shopping development called The Forks—is complete with river walkways, a children's museum and other tourist attractions. It is also the site where some Mennonite groups from Russia landed in Canada in the late 1800s.

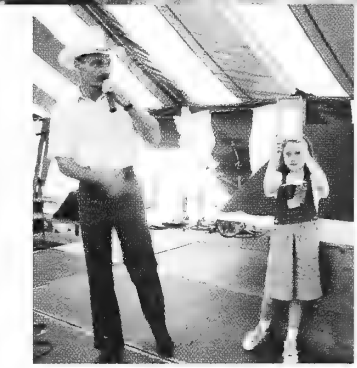
"People enjoy being outside," says Neustaedter, but high rental costs and setting up and taking down tents are drawbacks. "We have to be creative," Neustaedter says, adding that the ongoing challenge is finding volunteers willing to coordinate the many different aspects of the sale.

"In the past, an auction sale was a festival in itself," says Art Toews. "Now we employ different methods to draw people." This year 134 people participated in the stage shows, 20 in the children's programs and 43 roamed the grounds as itinerant entertainers, or "buskers."

Toews, who has coordinated the children's activities and musical entertainment for the past two years, encourages involvement of smaller Mennonite groups. This year, for example, he invited a choir from a Hutterite colony south of Winnipeg and the Xavier Fonseca Band from Iglesia Vida Abundante—a Spanish-speaking Mennonite church in Winnipeg.

The variety of entertainment and activities helps attract crowds but it is the sale of items that generates income. Phyllis Toews, who has headed the auction committee during the past three years, says they look for antiques, quilts, woodwork and other unique items. If they believe an item would receive a higher bid at a rural sale they pass it on to the Morris sale, in a community just south of Winnipeg.

"It is all a donation for MCC," she says. ■



All profile photos by Bruce Hildebrand, MCC Canada.

Gladys Terichow is an MCC Manitoba volunteer with the North End Women's Resource Centre in Winnipeg.

Pull-out section ▶▶▶

WINNIPEG

PROFILE:

Year sale started:
1994

Amount raised in 1996:
$50,000 Cdn./$36,500 U.S.

Mennonite churches in Winnipeg: 45

Children captured the spirit of the Winnipeg festival. MCC photo by Bruce Hildebrand.

Some 39 annual "relief sales" in North America raise millions of dollars for MCC through the sale and auction of quilts, crafts, art, used items, livestock, garden produce and food. In 1995 relief sales and related events contributed $6 million Cdn./$4.4 million U.S. to MCC's worldwide relief and development work. Local volunteers commit many hours to organizing these sales.

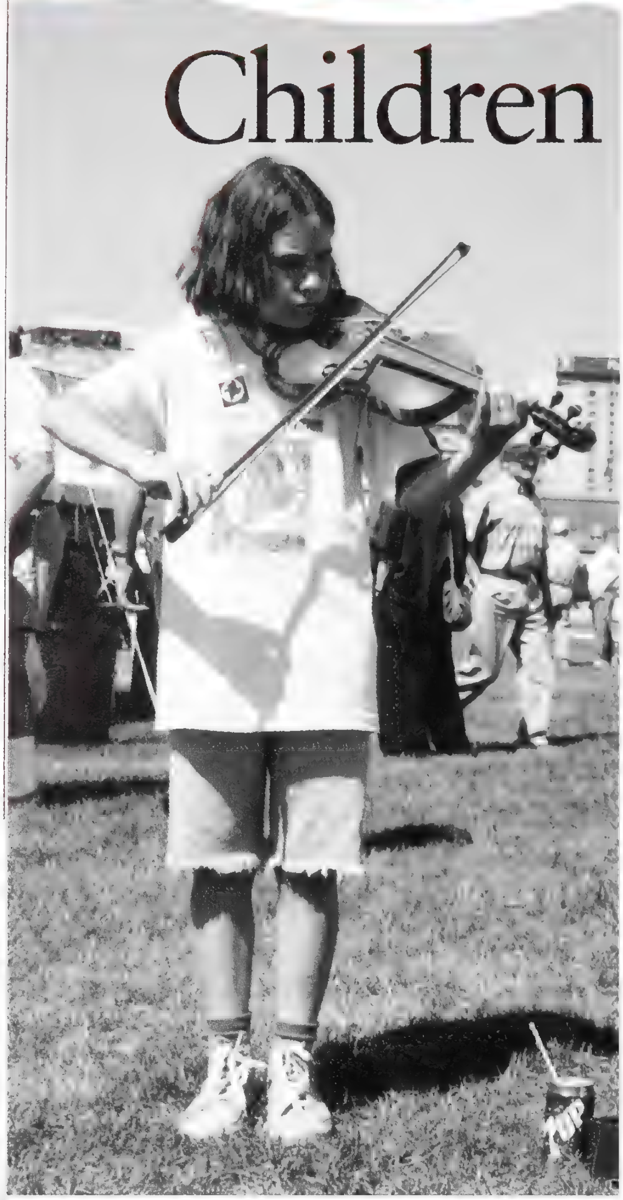
Three relief sales happen in Manitoba—in Winnipeg, Brandon and Morris. There are 13 relief sales in total in Canada and 26 in the United States.

The precursor to today's MCC relief sales was an auction sale held in 1922 on a farm owned by John K. Warkentin near Reedley, Calif. Organizers raised money to help Mennonites in Siberia. The first relief sale took place in Gap, Pa., in 1948.

FESTIVAL & RELIEF SALE

Children helping children

(and having fun, too)



Erin Braun "busking" for MCC. Children of all ages "got in on the act" to raise money for MCC.

Erin Braun is only 11 years old but she knows why she is busking for MCC at the Winnipeg MCC Festival and Relief Sale.

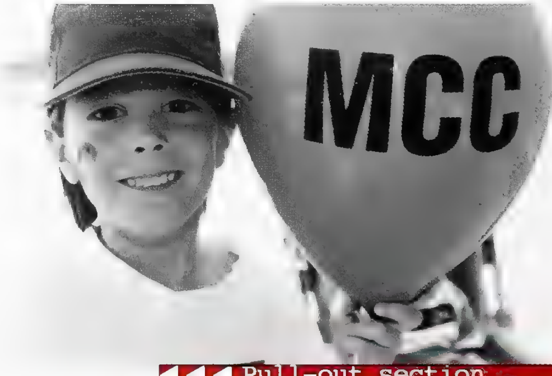
"It helps save lives and it's fun, too," she says, adding she's glad that money raised at this year's sale is designated for MCC's projects that benefit children.

"Some children have health problems. They don't have enough food. Their water is polluted. They have a big chance of dying."

Art Toews, chair of the children's activities and musical entertainment, says the relief sale, "is a way for us to pass on the vision to our children. We want to help them understand what MCC is all about and make service a part of their lives."

In keeping with this year's theme, "Welcome the children: Support MCC children's projects," children sold used toys donated to the sale.

Children's entertainment included puppeteers, magician, clowns, dramatic story reading, sacred dance, face painting and balloons. ■



Memory of drought never far away

Ample rain fell in most areas of southern Zambia in late 1995 and early 1996, nourishing fledgling maize plants and answering prayers for a sufficient harvest. Food prices have fallen and fewer people are going to bed hungry.

In 1995 Brethren in Christ church leaders in southern Zambia had appealed to the worldwide church for prayer. Due to drought and crop failure, some Zambians were eating only once a day.

Over the past year MCC has supplied, through the Zambian Brethren in Christ church, food and some 80 metric tons of seeds to Zambian farmers. When the seeds arrived, some people were so hungry they washed and ate them rather than planting them. Those who were able to plant and to afford fertilizers harvested bumper crops.

But the memory of drought is never far away. For eight of the past 10 years, inadequate rain has fallen in southern Zambia. Lois Neufeld, MCC Zambia country representative, reports, "People are careful to save every possible grain of maize in case of another drought."

Silkworms come to the farm

Seven rural Bangladeshi families are learning to care for silkworms in addition to chickens, cows and more typical farm animals. MCC is introducing silkworm raising in the traditional Muslim area of Noakhali District where families are large, farmland limited and women restricted from working outside their homes.

Silkworm raising requires little equipment, just a bamboo rack, but lots of labor. At certain times, the hungry worms must be fed mulberry leaves around the clock. The leaves must be cleaned, and baby worms need to have their leaves chopped into small pieces.

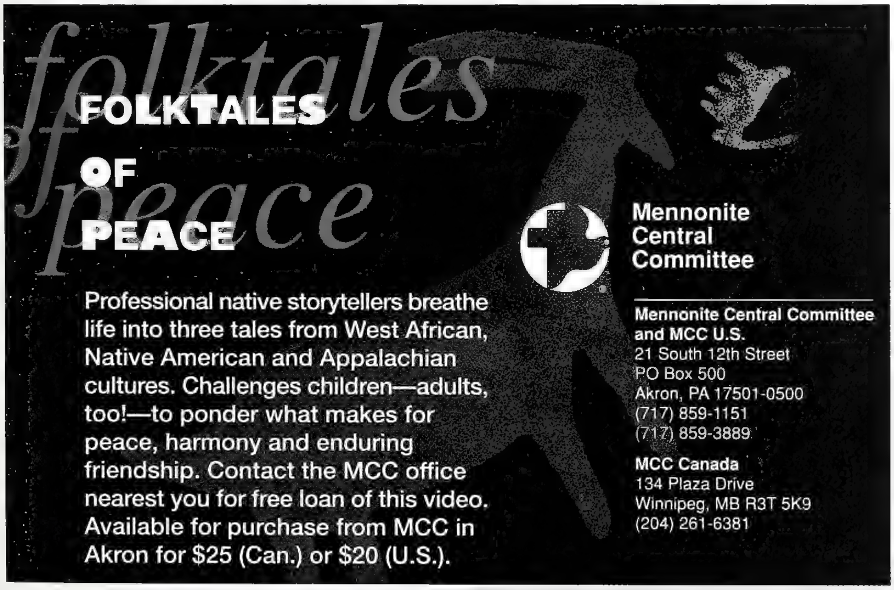
A family, working together, may be able to earn a significant supplement to their annual income, predicts Derek D'Silva, director of MCC's Bangladesh agriculture programs. Each family has about 50 mulberry trees, and four crops of silkworm cocoons can be raised per year from each tree. Families are currently selling cocoons to the government for export, but in the future D'Silva hopes to train and employ weavers to produce silk to sell in local markets.

Farm families in Asia, like this one in India, are finding raising silkworms a good way to earn extra income. MCC photo by Howard Zehr.

Learning sign language communicates love

Because Nigerian families of deaf children often do not know how to communicate with their children using American Sign Language, Athanasius Dapul, a Nigerian MCC worker, decided to do something about it. Athanasius spoke to parents of deaf children at the Plateau School for the Deaf. He discovered many parents were interested in improving communication with their children by learning sign language. He organized the first signing workshop for family and friends of deaf children.

Fifteen participants attended. Now some local congregations are asking for lessons in signing to enable them to communicate better with deaf members in their congregations. ■



folktales of peace

FOLKTALES OF PEACE

Professional native storytellers breathe life into three tales from West African, Native American and Appalachian cultures. Challenges children—adults, too!—to ponder what makes for peace, harmony and enduring friendship. Contact the MCC office nearest you for free loan of this video. Available for purchase from MCC in Akron for $25 (Can.) or $20 (U.S.).

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151
(717) 859-3889

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Folktales of Peace wins award

***Folktales of Peace* (see ad, left) has received a CINE Golden Eagle Award. The video may now represent the United States in international festivals. The award was given by the Council on International Non-theatrical Events, a nonprofit organization which promotes outstanding work in the industry.**

"To *dance* in the midst of suffering"

Farmers in Glina, Croatia, struggle to rebuild after the devastation of war. MCC photo by Kevin King.

Helping one "poor in spirit" in Zagreb, Croatia

by Amy Gopp

A dear friend reminded me, "To dance in the midst of suffering is not logical, but dance we must, lest we be reduced to only surviving." These people need to sing again, to dance again, to release themselves. How many times have I heard the phrase, "We just want to live normally again!"

Amy Gopp

For my first three months in Croatia I lived in a household with Goran, a refugee from Sarajevo. Goran was full of trauma—psychological, emotional and physical. I am convinced his throat cancer was a result of not being able to cry out or find his voice in the midst of the pain and ugliness he experienced. Goran was only 31 years old, yet he seemed without hope.

After not being able to prove he was a Bosnian Croat, and thus not getting citizenship papers to stay in Croatia, Goran decided to return to Sarajevo. And just like that he left my life—at least physically. He is still very much with me, though, because I learned so much from him about how to truly help a person.

When I was recently in Sarajevo I wondered if I would accidentally bump into Goran. As I walked, I saw a new Bennetton store in the middle of the city. My first reaction was that the store was unnecessary, and downright foolish. After all, investing money like that is a big risk; the store could be blown to bits at any time.

Then I thought: Sarajevo and its people like Goran

Amy Gopp stands beside a May Day poster that says: "May 1st, for a just peace, for democracy and human rights, for dignified work. Photo by Veronika Wischnewski.

Apoteka
PRVI MAJ
ZA PRAVEDAN MIR
ZA DEMOKRACIJU I LJUDSKA PRAVA
ZA DOSTOJANSTVEN RAD

have every right to cry out for normal lives, to tell the rest of the world they are still part of us—still part of the human race. I began to see that meeting basic human needs is more than helping someone survive; it is allowing people to restore their self-identity, to maintain their sense of pride and dignity and to hold onto their culture.

It was easy for me to give Goran food, clothes, a bed and a roof because I had resources. But it was difficult for me to give my love—true love motivated by a pure heart. But Goran needed love and care to help him start to heal. Maybe in some small way he felt the love I tried to give him in the best ways I knew how, but so many times I feel I failed to honor him as a person while putting food on the table and clean sheets on his bed.

Jesus calls us to accompany the poorest of the poor. Those poor in spirit are also in desperate need of Christ's true peace. I have met people in Bosnia who are materially poor but who served me coffee and all the food they could prepare. What then, truly, is poverty? I pray that I maintain a richness of spirit, allowing myself the time and space to feed, clothe and nurture my soul with God's love and peace. Only then can I best and most wisely help others restore their self-respect and dignity. May these be stepping stones to healing and true peace. Instead of "the poor refugee" who once lived with me, may Goran always be referred to as such—by his name. ■

Amy Gopp works with Christian Information Service in Zagreb, a local ecumenical press focusing on ecumenical dialogue and peace and conflict resolution education.

Editor's note: Since writing this article, Amy Gopp reports that Goran has died, in the Bosnian Franciscan monastery in downtown Sarajevo. A brother in the monastery reports Goran was well taken care of, and died in peace.

The most precious gifts

"Refugee kits sent by North American contributors, including items such as soap, shampoo, towels and other hygiene items, are very well received. MCC comforters are often the most colorful items refugees possess. Some used the industrial grey wool blankets they received to cover cement, wooden or dirt floors. The handmade comforters were placed on the bed, a bit of light and warmth in often cramped living quarters. As one woman told me, 'They are the most precious gifts; we can see the human love in them.'"

Kevin King
MCC U.S. material resources coordinator

God's love in a violin

One of the most precious and important aspects of our work is to develop personal relationships with refugees in Belgrade. Their needs are more than simply "the basics."

The Zezelj family were musicians from Zadar in Croatia. Even though the family had hardly enough food to eat, Radmila Zezelj's concern was finding a violin for her daughters to continue their lessons. The oldest daughter, Daniela, was so depressed about losing her past life, her home and friends, that her hair was starting to fall out.

Jasmina Tosich, who works with refugees at the Bread of Life organization (see September 1995 issue of *a Common Place*), suggested the family pray about finding a violin. Radmila said she was an atheist, and couldn't believe in God, or that anything would work out because of prayer.

After several phone calls Jasmina found a violin available for them. A Bread of Life donor agreed to purchase the violin if it were suitable for Daniela and Lara, Radmila's two daughters. Radmila was speechless with gratitude.

We try to ensure first that all refugees' basic needs are met. But as the story of Radmila and her daughters illustrates, we have experienced that God shows love and concern to people in personal and individual ways, and that the human soul has needs beyond the merely physical.

Mark Jantzen
MCC worker in Serbia

Children here are "WOWed" into service

by Susan Miller Balzer

Laura Goering knots a comforter with her mother, Susan. MCC photo by Susan Miller Balzer.

Work on Wednesdays—or "WOW"—at the MCC material resources center in North Newton, Kan., is not all work and no play. What, then, is it?

It's a way for boys and girls to tie knots on comforters while they build ties with grandparents, to package health kits and learn about the people who receive them, to break from their summer routines and try new activities and to get started in the MCC tradition of service, "In the name of Christ."

Workroom supervisor Lorene Kaufman designated four Wednesday forenoons in June and July for the WOW program, building on a tradition started in previous years. Twenty girls, mothers and grandmothers, as well as a group of junior high-aged boys from the week before, filled the workroom on a Wednesday in late June.

"If we do it next year, we will plan for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays all summer," Kaufman said. "That will spread it out more, and I can visit better with the groups."

The WOW volunteers packed layettes and health kits, knotted a comforter, sewed and rolled bandages, cut quilt blocks and started a new quilt. During a cookie and tea break they watched an MCC video. They also toured the warehouse and saw donated clothing being baled for shipment overseas.

"It's a great project, a good way to get them started," said Lois Kreider, veteran MCC volunteer, as she worked with her granddaughters who were visiting from Minnesota.

"We came last week. It's a highlight of our week, so we wanted to be sure it was on our agenda again," said Deb Goering, who was there with her two daughters.

"It's interesting how the boys enjoy knotting comforters," Kaufman notes. "Before they had to go home last week, they kept saying: 'Just one more knot!"

"Oh oh, we can't make any more health kits," six-year-old Greta Kreider Carlson groaned when that project had to stop for the day.

Jumping up and down, Rashell Kaufman coaxed, "One more time!" as her mother prepared to leave.

"They just didn't realize how much fun they were going to have today," Evelyn Harms said.

Lorene Kaufman has also scheduled work days for children and youth to come with their group sponsors. Thirty youth will come from Brownsville, Texas, and Goessel, Kan., in July. Central Kansas groups are scheduled throughout the year. ■

Susan Miller Balzer is a freelance writer in Hesston, Kan.

Help alleviate hunger.

MCC Feeds Hungry People, a 38-minute video, tells how MCC provides food, and addresses causes of hunger. Volunteers of all ages raise money to help alleviate hunger in the world. Featured are people telling of their participation in projects such as Houses against Hunger, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a relief sale, a fast to raise awareness about hunger, a CROP Walk and the Global Family program. To borrow this video contact the MCC office nearest you (see address list on page 15).

Penny Power Project

From Saskatchewan to the Sahara

by Pearl Sensenig

Volunteer helps dig wells in Burkina Faso

As dusk falls, neighbors gather on Steven Guether's porch, swatting insects and swapping news. It could be a scene from Osler, Sask., Steven's hometown. Instead the setting is thousands of kilometers away in Djibo, a small village near the Sahara Desert in the West African nation of Burkina Faso.

In 1994 Steven left his family's dairy and grain farm in Saskatchewan to come here as an MCC volunteer. "We have so much in Canada. When I had the opportunity to serve people overseas who have less than we have, I thought I should take it," he explains.

Burkina Faso is one of the world's poorest countries with an average yearly income of only $400 Cdn./$292 U.S. Most peanut and millet farmers around Djibo are even poorer. A seven-year drought spanning the late 1960s and early 1970s killed a third of the farm animals. Several drier-than-normal years since then have made it difficult for farmers to rebuild their livestock. Villagers say finding adequate water continues to be their biggest problem.

Steven helps people construct hand-dug wells and dams, and improve their farming techniques. "The soil in Burkina Faso is so fragile and light that it easily erodes," explains Steven. "Rainfall is similar to Saskatchewan but more unreliable and the water evaporates much faster—as much as an inch in one day." Dams help retain the water and raise the water level in nearby wells.

Beyond building agricultural and water systems, Steven's goal is to teach skills. "In Canada, too, it's what you know that makes your farm profitable," he says.

Steven works on knowledge rather than "capital-intensive" projects. Constructing a hand-built earthen dam, for example, costs little but involves months of labor by the entire village. After Steven returns to Canada, probably in 1997, villagers can teach others the simple techniques used to build small-scale dams.

Steven has also learned something from his time in Burkina Faso. "My experience here has been a revelation," he says. Without the familiar—friends, family and church—"I have become a lot more aware of who I am, and how I have been influenced by those around me... I have become more grateful for the things I take so much for granted." ■

Building a dam can take several years of part-time work. Djibo villagers encourage Steve Guenther to pitch in. MCC photo by Pearl Sensenig.

Assignment:
help provide water

MCC water resources development workers help provide this precious resource for people in Africa and Asia. Help provide water and work in community development in Burkina Faso or Nigeria, work with the Highlands Water Project in Lesotho, or as a coastal resources researcher in the Philippines. For information about these and other assignments contact your nearest MCC office (see list this page).

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

Where is your nearest MCC office?

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151
(717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

MCC Central States
106 West 24th Street
PO Box 235
North Newton, Kansas 67117
(316) 283-2720

MCC East Coast
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-3889

MCC Great Lakes
13363 Jericho Road, Box 82
Kidron, OH 44636
(330) 857-7721

West Coast MCC
1010 G Street
Reedley, CA 93654
(209) 638-6911

MCC Alberta
76 Skyline Crescent N.E.
Calgary, AB T2K 5X7
(403) 275-6935

MCC British Columbia
Box 2038
Abbotsford, BC V2T 3T8
(604) 850-6639

MCC Manitoba
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

MCC Ontario
50 Kent Avenue
Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1
(519)745-8458

MCC Saskatchewan
600 - 45th Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7L 5W9
(306) 665-2555

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" James 1:17.

Give a good gift to others this holiday season.

The gift of a new beginning. Spring floods in Mozambique destroyed 26,000 acres of crops and nearly 22,000 homes. These floods came on the heels of severe droughts and a 17-year civil war. Gifts of seeds will enable these people to replant their fields. $34 Cdn./$25 U.S. buys 11 kgs./25 lbs. of seeds.

A gift of health. The 600 women earning an income through MCC's job creation programs in rural Bangladesh lack adequate health care. Some have died in recent years from preventable illnesses. A gift of $34 Cdn./$25 U.S. will give these 600 women, often sole supporters of their families, a monthly doctor's visit.

A gift of food. Thousands of Sudanese refugees camped in Uganda wait for war to end so they can return home. Ugandan Christians share as they can, even when drought has left them precariously short of food. A gift of $20 Cdn./$15 U.S. buys 7 kgs/15 lbs. of rice for these refugees.

The gift of independence. In Jordan many people with disabilities are secluded at home, partly due to poverty or shame. A wheel chair or hearing aid gives these people new independence. A gift of $19 Cdn./$14 U.S. buys a hearing exam for a child, a first step toward a fuller life.

These gifts are part of the spiritual and physical healing ministries of Mennonite Central Committee. Use envelope included in this issue to send your gift.

News

Mennonite World Conference looks beyond 1997

Strasbourg, France (MWC)—Mennonite World Conference executive members met in late July in northeast Holland to consider matters important to Mennonites and Brethren in Christ around the world.

The agenda called for decisions such as equitably distributing $1 million through the Global Sharing Fund, endorsing an international call for climate control, determining relationships with member churches with contested leadership, re-electing an executive secretary, and fine-tuning details for India 1997.

Making decisions that span five continents with integrity by representatives without a common language demanded time and patience. Long days and hard work were punctuated with occasions for refreshment and renewal.

Dutch Mennonites provided a bus pilgrimage to Witmarsum in Friesland to visit Menno Simons' birthplace. The Doopsgezinde congregation at Drachten rented bicycles for the group to enjoy an evening ride into the countryside. Morning devotions offered reflective moments guided by different committee members each day.

President Raul Garcia announced results of a ballot vote by MWC member churches for the unanimous re-election of Larry Miller to a second six-year term as executive secretary following India 1997.

Considerable time during the week-long meeting was spent discussing India 1997, scheduled for next January in Calcutta. Margaret Devadason (India), who directs the Calcutta MWC office, invited counsel and decision on many practical matters. In a devotional, Leonor Argueta de Mendez (Guatemala) said, "To get together only to be together makes no sense. But if our goal is to witness to Jesus, our presence in India will be a gift of faith. A world assembly symbolizes the unity of the church and is a testimony to the world. It will be a foretaste of what one day will be perfect harmony."

Although at least six years away, Assembly 14 was on the table. In line with the precedent established by meeting in India, the committee was unanimous in voting to explore options for holding a world gathering

MENNO'S
FERMANJE

Eleanor Miller, MWC

Mennonites on pilgrimage: *(From left) Joram Mbeba of Tanzania and Elizabeth and Charles Khrossad of France at the "Hidden Church" in Friesland, the Netherlands*

Inside the news

Project records non-Western Mennonite history / p. 14

Youth gain new perspective on homeless / p. 15

"I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui'" / p. 15

Workers discuss how to work with trauma victims / p. 16

Kenyans try to avoid Somalia's chaos / p. 18

Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala / p. 19

Sabbatical renews mediator for work in Northern Ireland / p. 20

Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim, Sask., invites former members and friends to a 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 29. George and Martha Janzen will be leading services.

• • •

Information on India 1997—the Mennonite World Conference's Assembly to be held next January in Calcutta—is now available on the World Wide Web. Registration and travel information and MWC news are available at http://www.mph.lm.com/mwc.html.

• • •

Mennonite Mutual Aid is closer to possible pilot projects on alternative medicine. MMA conducted a study of its members that showed that 38 percent had already used alternative medicine in the last two years, and 67 percent believe MMA insurance should cover some or all alternative medicine. MMA will likely test alternative medicine coverage with one of its group insurance employers. MMA may also support the development of a program for reversing coronary artery disease.

next in Africa or Latin America. The executive secretary was instructed to connect with churches in several countries and propose possible locations for Assembly 14 when the committee meets just before Assembly 13.

Environmental petition endorsed: After spirited debate the committee endorsed an international petition to governments of industrialized countries, the Climate Change Petition Campaign (see news clip, page 19). The statement calls on industrialized nations to make good on promises to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000, as agreed at 1992's Earth Summit.

The executive committee will take to the General Council a statement of mutual expectations between MWC and Mennonite Central Committee, service agency of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America with a global infrastructure. The statement would enhance working relationships between the two bodies in a global spirit of accountability and mutuality. *Willard E. Roth*

Project records non-Western Mennonite history

Strasbourg, France (MWC)—In an attempt to record Anabaptist history through non-Western eyes, the Mennonite World Conference executive committee approved the Global Mennonite History Project during its July meeting in the Netherlands.

More Mennonites and Brethren in Christ live in Africa, Asia and Latin America than in Europe and North America. "This … takes place in the context of a globalizing culture that affects all peoples on planet earth," says the project prospectus.

Local history is one important way of understanding the church on a global scale. The project aims to generate local historical insight about how the local church adds to the history of the world church.

"I have some concern about this project," confessed Bishop Joram Mbeba of Tanzania. "[Until now] missionaries and historians in Europe and North America have interpreted the rest of the world. Will it be possible to listen to ordinary people in Africa, Asia and Latin America?

> ***"Will it be possible to listen to ordinary people in Africa, Asia and Latin America?"***
>
> ***Joram Mbeba***

"In Africa our churches have tended to be peripheral," Mbeba continued. "I am happy this project will include peripheral Mennonites. There must be some difference in the way things are seen through African eyes."

The project will be launched at India 1997 with completion expected by Assembly 14, six years later. "Special funding for the project will come from sources which ordinarily do not support Mennonite World Conference; current MWC funds will not be used," said MWC executive secretary Larry Miller.

Collaborative work will include training in oral interviewing, research and writing, collecting documents, exchanging scholars, sponsoring historical conferences and producing a global Mennonite history.

The end product will integrate basic historical data on Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in the major regions of the world, including transition from missions to churches, practices of the Christian life and work of the church, inculturation of the church in specific settings, relations with other Christians and faiths, and unique contribution of these churches to regional Christian movements and the global Mennonite church.

John A. Lapp was appointed project coordinator. Lapp recently completed service as Mennonite Central Committee executive secretary. "There is something foreboding about such an undertaking," Lapp said. "It will require the collaborative work of many minds and hearts. It needs to be a process that celebrates a new epoch of church history and a new consciousness reflecting the emerging global identity." *Willard E. Roth*

Debbie Loh, a 1996 graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, will be an intern for ABC News' *Nightline* program with Ted Koppel. She is one of four interns in ABC's Washington bureau. Loh, a communication major from Malaysia, is the second Goshen student to work with *Nightline*.

• • •

First Things **reports that the committee in charge of redesigning the Children's Zoo in New York's Central Park wants to do away with sculptures of Noah and Jonah's whale, saying the statues reflect a religious theme for which public money should not be used. Parks commissioner Henry J. Stern says, however, that Noah should not be viewed as a biblical character but as the first conservationist, and should stay. (*AFA Journal*)**

• • •

"The share of all private wealth [in the United States] (stocks, bonds, real estate, land, other assets) owned by the richest 1 percent has increased from 19 percent in 1976 to over 40 percent today," noted Church Collins and Felice Yeskel, co-directors of United for a Fair Economy, in *Network Connection*. "This richest 1 percent, with wealth starting at $2.3 million, now has more than the bottom 92 percent of the population combined." (*Salt of the Earth*)

• • •

Applications are invited for the Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund. The fund annually distributes approximately $2,500 for projects dealing with history, peacemaking (especially in the Middle East), Mennonite ecumenicity and the Christian faith. Preference is given to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ people who are studying or working in Canada. Application forms are available from Sam Steiner, administrator, Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6. Applications must be received by Nov. 15. The award will be announced February 1997.

Youth gain new perspective on homeless

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When a group of Youth Venture participants arrived at St. Michael's Mission in Montreal for their first day of service, the director of the soup kitchen told them to mingle with the homeless people who were eating there.

To Alysa Sauder, Archbold, Ohio, those directions seemed "sorta scary. I wondered what I would say to them."

But by the end of the week, Sauder felt like she had become friends with some of the regulars who came to the mission for food and clothing.

"I learned so much," says Sauder, who was one of seven youth participants in the July 28-Aug. 4 Youth Venture in Montreal.

Youth Venture is part of Mennonite Service Venture, which is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

One day, outside St. Michael's Mission, Sauder saw some homeless people use their hands to scoop out pieces of watermelon because they did not have any silverware.

"Some people don't have anything. We take even ... simple things like silverware and plates for granted," she says.

At the same time, Sauder found that the homeless are "just ordinary people."

Danielle Graybill, Johnstown, Pa., agreed (see next story). "Mostly, I learned that the homeless are not any different from us. They have brothers and sisters and parents."

Graybill said that after her experience in Montreal, she probably would not walk away if a homeless person wanted to talk to her because "they do have emotions. They are regular people just like us."

"People just like us": *Montreal Youth Venture group in front of Maison de L'Amitie. Back row (left to right): unidentified refugee; Ryan Loewer, Youth Venture leader from Seattle; unidentified refugee; Jacob VanWingen, Washington; Tim Hofer, Lawrence, Kan.; Rachel Sorris, Bethlehem, Pa.; Alyssa Brenneman, Salisbury, Pa.; Danielle Graybill, Johnstown, Pa. Front row: Eve from Montreal; Alysa Sauder, Archbold, Ohio; Rachel Hostetler, Kansas City, Kan.*

"I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui.'"

Editor's Note: *Danielle Graybill belongs to First Mennonite Church, Johnstown, Pa. She wrote this article after volunteering at St. Michael's Mission as part of her Montreal Youth Venture experience July 28-Aug. 4. St. Michael's Mission allows only one set of clothing for each homeless person in order to ensure that there is enough clothing for everyone. Every other day, the homeless can come back to the mission for a new set of clothes. The mission washes the old clothes and puts them back on the shelves to be used again.*

Montreal (GCMC)—A man of about 60 years walks in. He is tired but does not show it. His shoes are about two sizes too small for his feet, but he does not limp. His shirt is torn, but he hides it with his arm.

"Can I help you?" I ask, trying to cover the awkwardness in my voice.

"Yes," he says, "I need new pants."

I look at his pants, noticing how dirty and worn they are. I show him the rack of pants.

I have been working at St. Michael's Mission in Montreal all week, but this is the first day that I am helping provide clothing to the homeless.

When the man finds a pair of pants that look about his size, he goes on to the shirts.

"I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui.'"

"What?" I say, turning to face the man who

Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church has the following new officers: Liz Klassen, Kitchener, Ont., president; Louise Auernheimer, Reedley, Calif., secretary, and Candi Dietterich, Andover, Kan., publications committee representative.

• • •

Nearly 3 million people died from tuberculosis in 1995, more than in any other year in history, reports World Health Organization. TB is now the leading infectious killer of youth and adults worldwide. Nearly half the world's refugees may be infected with TB. Dr. Arata Kochi, director of WHO's global TB program, says, "The TB epidemic must be fought globally to protect people locally."

• • •

An estimated $11 billion is spent annually in Canada on gambling, and it's time for the Christian community to take a stand against it, says Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba executive director Peter Peters. "Many people have come to accept gambling as a socially acceptable form of entertainment and a growing industry that creates new jobs," Peters says. "We are afraid to touch it, but these are issues the church must address. We must learn how to work together to take a strong position on gambling, like we have on other social issues." In May, MCC Manitoba joined other church groups in sending an open letter to the Manitoba government expressing concerns about the negative impact of gambling. The letter says "a message is being given in our society that success comes through luck rather than cooperation, sharing and effort. ... We believe that the massive growth of state-run gambling is creating an encouragement to gamble that is putting at risk the most vulnerable in our society." Peters says, "Instead of taxing people to provide needed social services, governments have taken the easy way to raise money by promoting gambling. It amounts to a taxation on the most vulnerable people in our society."

A new Canadian policy lets conscientious objectors in the military obtain release from service. According to the policy, members who have a "sincere objection to participation in war in general or to the bearing and use of arms as a requirement of military service may apply for release as a conscientious objector." According to the policy, the objection must be based on "religious or moral study and belief" and not limited to participation in a particular conflict or operation. As well, the claimant must provide evidence to back up the claim. Evidence would include membership in a religious group which opposes war and the claimant's "adherence to such tenets." The policy was developed in consultation with a number of agencies, including MCC Canada.

• • •

In April, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service seized the title to the house and land of Elizabeth Gravalos and Arthur Harvey, war tax resisters living near Hartford, Maine. On June 19, the IRS took sealed bids on the property. The family's two woodlots and blueberry fields, their major source of income, were sold, but the house was not. Prior to that auction, supporters of the family held a "mock sale" at which they raised more than $2,000. That money went to pay off the local property tax liens of seven families in Hartford. Organizers pointed out the irony of the federal government spending billions on the military while cutting programs that benefit low-income families, leaving them struggling to keep their homes. On July 16, the IRS opened sealed bids on the Gravalos/Harvey house. The high bid came from Elizabeth's mother. The couple had asked her not to bid but she was unwilling to let them lose their home.

has just spoken.

"I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui' from God," he repeats with a toothless grin as he pulls out an aqua-blue T-shirt that clashes with his pants.

I smile back at him, wondering if I should say something, anything. I decide to stick with a simple smile.

"Are there any underclothes?" he asks me. I glance around the room. I hadn't even thought about it. Who would donate underwear?

"I'm sorry," I say apologetically, "there aren't any."

"That's OK," he replies, "what about socks and shoes?"

I point him to another section of the room where the shoes are. He carefully pulls out each old, ratty shoe and examines it. At one time, they were all nice dress shoes. But they aren't what he needs.

I keep thinking, "Why didn't I give him my shoes?"

Danielle Graybill

He moves on to the socks and pulls out two pair. "Can I have two?" he asks hopefully. When I shake my head no, he sets one down.

"I have bloody feet," he says. "It's because I walk a lot. It gets cold at night, but I have a sleeping bag that I hide. Sometimes I'm afraid someone will find it and take it, but I have a good hiding place."

He walks closer to me, "This is my ... my grandkids." He hands me a picture of two children.

"They're cute kids," I say, handing back the picture. He reaches in his pocket and pulls out more pictures, explaining what each one is.

"This is from when I was in the war, and this is of me and my mother. This man saved my life when I was a little boy."

"And who is this?" I ask.

"My daughter," he answers. "I am a painter. I sold [a painting] and went on a rampage. I'm an alcoholic. Now I can't let my family see me this way."

"How long has it been since you've seen your family?" I ask.

"Four or five months," he replies. "My wife died of cancer." His voice cracks. "Thank you," he whispers and quickly walks out of the room.

My eyes mist, and I have to blink away the tears. I keep thinking, "Why didn't I give him my shoes?" *Danielle Graybill*

Workers discuss how to work with trauma victims

Chicago—"War is absolute madness. Getting sick is a normal response to madness," said Erich Zurcher.

Zurcher, a psychiatrist from Switzerland, went to Russia with one of three Mental Health and Peace-Building tours to war-torn areas of the world, sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) earlier this year.

The tours brought together mental health workers from North America and the three regions they visited, Central America, Africa and Europe. The tours culminated in a June 6-9 consultation, where 56 participants, including tour group members and other mental health practitioners, discussed their findings.

The tours' purpose was to explore ways to integrate mental health work with MCC's peacemaking and conciliation initiatives.

Ray Brubacher, director of MCC's overseas services and a member of MCC's former International Mental Health and Disabilities Committee , said, "IMHDC ceased to exist in 1994 because it was hard to see how the North American mental health agenda fit the trauma needs of people in places of conflict in the developing world. MCC decided to host these tours to broaden the group of health workers interested in trauma healing in places recovering from war. The tours fit MCC's goal of connecting people and institutions."

The tours also enabled people from one country to see how their situation was understood in another. When Violette Nyirarukundo from Rwanda traveled with her tour group to Swaziland she found that Christians there knew about the trauma in Rwanda.

"At times I had asked God, 'Why do you want us to live when we prefer to die?'" said Nyirarukundo. "I have begun to see that the tragedy in Rwanda may bring unity in the churches. Our group was ... in a small village in Swaziland. When people in the church heard I was from Rwanda they wanted to pray for me. They danced and prayed for me and the people of Rwanda. I learned that God is using tragedy to bring people together."

The consultation showed how people are working at trauma healing in various settings. Marina Berkovskaya, a tour participant and psychologist from Moscow, said, "We are all humans and humans feel the same emotions, but we express them very differently in different cultures."

In Chechnya, Berkovskaya used healing methods that draw from people's internal resources. As people told their stories she listened for a way to "reframe" the events. She reflected back to them their own ways of explaining the events that could transform their understanding.

"I could not suggest forgiveness. Forgiveness is a long process. I can't say, 'He must forgive.' He mustn't! It's his life. I also would not ask about the details of a traumatic event. The person thinks everyone knows about it. He lost everything in that situation; it would be offensive for me not to know about it. If I ask, he will give a trained, polite story. Chechens are very polite. But I wouldn't hear the truth," said Berkovskaya.

As a short-term worker Berkovskaya felt she could gain credibility partly because she was an outsider. "They know the information they give me will die with me," she said. As a short-term worker she was trusted. She felt it was her job to transfer that trust to the local long-term worker.

> ***"God is using tragedy to bring people together."***
> ***Violette Nyirarukundo of Rwanda***

"I tell clients that the local therapists are skilled, well-trained professionals and I trust them," Berkovskaya said.

The tension between MCC's preference for long-term presence and most mental health workers' ability to provide only short-term service was an issue that caused long discussions.

Ron Kraybill stressed the need for any short-term international work to be connected to a long-term relationship. Former director of Mennonite Conciliation Services, Kraybill has done short-term conciliation work for MCC as well as working long-term in South Africa.

"Short-term solutions tend to keep people locked in a crisis mode," said Kraybill. "Their focus is their survival as victims. People who are hurting want someone to come and save them. The temptation for us to try to meet that need is strong."

Dave Klassen (MCC)

Healing trauma: *A Burundian woman near Kibimba. She is one of thousands displaced by the violence that has torn Burundi apart.*

Kraybill said it is important to take time to discover and use expertise and models that already exist in that culture. "Our purpose when we go is to empower the healers, not to do the healing," said Kraybill.

Other participants, however, believed that information itself can be empowering rather than imperialistic. The Central American tour group talked with people who said they would be eager for information on how to intervene in situations of domestic violence and how to interview women who have been raped.

"This is information I have from my work on abuse issues here in North America," said Carolyn Holderread Heggen, professor of psychology and member of the Central American tour group. "If this information were provided to them in Spanish it would empower them to do better what they are committed to doing."

Tour participants related requests they heard for more women to come to work with women, who are often the people working for peace in their own cultures.

"New ideas emerged for ways MCC can use people in the mental health field," said Brubacher. "MCC now knows a group of health-care professionals to consider for service opportunities. Participants have set up an e-mail network among themselves."
Gwen Groff

It costs the U.S. government $276,000 to support one government worker in Cairo, Egypt, for one year. American workers are required to buy American-made products and often ride in chauffeur-driven cars, according to Mick Sommers, a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Egypt. The total MCC annual budget for Egypt for 18 adults, seven children, two full-time Egyptian staff, various grants and material resource assistance is $289,206, slightly more than the United States spends on one worker. According to Sommers, American government workers insulate themselves from the country they work in by insisting on an American standard of living. (*MB Herald*)

• • •

The Mennonite Mutual Aid Board of Directors met Aug. 9-10 in Goshen, Ind., and reaffirmed the organization's direct links to congregational mutual aid efforts through its Sharing Fund matching grant programs. Board decisions included final approval for a plan to offer investment choice to participants of Mennonite Retirement Trust. By mid-year 1997, MRT participants will be able to choose how they want their MRT retirement funds invested. MRT is a pension plan for the employees of churches and church-related organizations. The board also gave final approval for the development of an MMA Praxis International Fund. This new mutual fund will have socially screened investments like the already established MMA Praxis Growth Fund and Income Fund. MMA will explore offering community-based services for older adults. Potential services include health screening, in-home personal care and educational programs.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is offering to help pay the costs of writing a new personal will or updating an old will. "A Will for Every Home" will reimburse church members or attenders half their legal fees up to $75. Every fraternally eligible congregation may participate if they have an active MMA advocate. Churches who do not have an advocate but would like to appoint one may contact MMA toll-free at 1-800-348-7468 for more information.

• • •

The Protestant Anabaptist Church of Ivory Coast has been founded by former Baptist leader-turned Mennonite Raymond Affouka Eba. Three congregations with nearly 200 combined members have officially joined the church; membership could expand into three other countries: Cameroon, Chad and Togo. James Krabill, Mennonite Board of Missions West Africa director, says Eba "came to Anabaptism and actually started a denomination and nine churches without ever meeting a Western missionary . He didn't even know there were Mennonites in the country." (*Mennonite Reporter* and *Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

A nun whose car was stolen wanted the judge to sentence the thief to watch the movie *Dead Man Walking* as part of his punishment, reports Evangelical Press News Service. The judge chose a more traditional way of sentencing. The nun, Sister Frances Kirk, is a member of the same order as Sister Helen Prejean, whose work with death-row inmates is shown in the film. Kirk wanted the thief to learn about the work of the church and to see how his actions affected not only her but people she was helping. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

Kenyans try to avoid Somalia's chaos

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—As bullets flew by, Dekha Ibrahim slid her baby under the bed to shield her from harm.

Ibrahim's mother had done the same when her children were young. "My daughter will not have to hide her babies under the bed," Ibrahim vowed and set out to break the cycle of violence that gripped Wajir, a town in northeastern Kenya.

Kenya is a country divided by ethnic, religious, political and economic differences. An important role for Mennonite Central Committee workers Hadley and Janice Jenner is to support Kenyans, like Ibrahim, who are working to prevent their country from slipping into the chaos that has destroyed neighboring countries like Somalia, Sudan and Rwanda.

"By many people's standards, Dekha Ibrahim is not important. She is young, a woman and a Somali. In Kenya, that's three strikes against her," says Janice. "However, she didn't let that stop her."

Ibrahim began talking to other women at Wajir's market. They agreed they were tired of living in fear.

The women approached the men and convinced them peace would be good for business. They talked to youth and pointed out that in wars young people are the ones who fight and die. They talked to elders, saying it was irresponsible not to encourage peace.

The townspeople organized themselves into the Wajir Peace and Development group. Among other activities, the group organized a rapid response team that travels to trouble spots to help resolve disagreements.

Today Wajir is more peaceful than it has been in 20 years. Recently the town held a peace festival where prizes were awarded to local peacemakers.

Over the past two years MCC has contributed $17,000 U.S. ($23,000 Cdn.) to the Wajir Peace and Development group.

But Ibrahim told the Jenners that knowing outsiders cared about them and the situation in Wajir was as important as the funding. In fact, Ibrahim wanted to be sure MCC supporters shared her passion for peacemaking before she accepted the money.

After completing seven years as administrators of MCC's relief and development programs in Kenya, the Jenners have no difficulty listing problems Kenyans face.

As the population increases, available land shrinks. Many young people are unable to find jobs. At times violence flares among the country's 43 ethnic groups. Politicians sometimes manipulate situations for their own gain.

More fundamentally, Kenyans are trying to meld traditional ways with the modern nation-state they inherited from their British colonizers.

"This is a difficult time for Kenyans. Sometimes it seems that Kenya is tottering on the brink and could slide over the edge at any time," says Janice.

But the Jenners also witnessed many people working for peace, including some Kenyan Mennonites who have participated in peace workshops.

"Peacemaking at the grass-roots level can be a lonely task. By supporting Kenyan peacemakers, we felt we were representing many North American Mennonites who are also interested in promoting peace," says Janice. *Pearl Sensenig*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Tired of living in fear: *Sako Komchore Torre tends a camel in Kenya's arid northeast. In the early 1990s, drought, an influx of Somali refugees and ongoing disputes over land increased violence in the area. In the town of Wajir, a charismatic young woman named Dekha Ibrahim organized residents to form the Wajir Peace and Development group. Today Wajir is more peaceful than it has been in 20 years.*

Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—"Alternative tourism" is the buzzword in travel now, describing trips that go beyond traditional tourist sites and activities. But two Mennonite church groups have gone beyond alternative tourism.

Instead of spending vacation time and funds on tourism, groups from Nebraska and Ontario have raised money and donated time and sweat to building projects in rural Guatemala. Mennonite Central Committee workers in the country helped arrange the projects.

The Ruth and Nohemi Crafts Co-op in Chontola, Guatemala, was founded by 16 Quiche Indian widows whose husbands were murdered or disappeared in Guatemala's political violence. Ten members of Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church spent two weeks in late February helping build a home for one of the widows.

"We carried cement blocks and sand and gravel on footpaths down the mountainside," reports Donna Freeman. She and her husband, Richard, led the Floradale group.

Members paid their own way and their congregation gave money for supplies and to hire a Guatemalan mason and two helpers.

The house had risen five rows of blocks by the time the group left. The Freemans have since received a photo of the finished home.

Chontola is mountainous and rural, Donna says, with several churches and three stores. The house site was a one-mile walk beyond Chontola.

The Ruth and Nohemi Co-op has a workshop in nearby Chichicastenango, where the widows' children receive schooling and sew crafts such as handbags and belts from their mothers' weavings.

Through the cooperative the widows help one another and strive toward self-sufficiency.

At a farewell dinner for the group, as the women expressed their thanks,"lots of memories of the violence and suffering surfaced," writes MCC worker Elaine Zook Barge. "They all cried as they spoke in Quiche, Juana cried as she translated to Spanish, and I cried putting it into English."

Ruth Anne Friesen (MCC)

People-to-people bridges: *Donna Freeman hauls sand, Mayan-style, up a mountainside to help build a home for a widow of Guatemala's violence who also belongs to a crafts co-op.*

"The women told us that normally husbands do this work, but so many men are missing," says Donna. The women's faith in God despite persecution "had a great impact on us," she says.

A second group—a construction crew of 11 men from Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Neb.—contributed skills and funds for a January building project at an alternative technology center in San Lucas, a town outside Guatemala City.

Working with MCC partner agency CEDESCRI, a Christian service organization, the Nebraska group helped build a student dormitory, a chicken house and extensive shelving for a workshop.

CEDESCRI trains youth and adult students at the center and also provides an extension service.

This is the second work group Bethesda has sent, reports Robert Epp, a retired farmer who led both of them. (See Aug. 27 issue, page 10.) The first group went to Guatemala in 1995.

Epp says that not only the construction work was valuable but also "the experience of understanding a bit about what Guatemalans have had to put up with …; they struggle to put food on the table."

Both the Freemans and Epp, all of whom have traveled previously in Central America, noted the importance of pre-trip preparation. "Begin-

The U.S. Congressional Budget Office reports that overall federal government welfare spending, excluding Medicaid, costs $415 per taxpayer per year. At the same time, corporate tax breaks cost $791 per taxpayer per year. (*Newton Area Peace Center Newsletter*)

• • •

Much of the world relies on only five countries for food: the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina and Brazil. As a result, reports Pacific News Service, "urban farming" is beginning. In Berlin there are 80,000 community gardeners, with 1,600 people on a waiting list. In Moscow in 1990, 65 percent of economically pressed families raised their own food, up from 20 percent in 1970. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office is supporting the Climate Change Petition Campaign. The petition declares that we make the commitment to reduce our energy consumption to help reduce carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere, through personal lifestyle changes and legislative changes. For information on the petition campaign contact the Office of Environmental Justice, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 100 Witherspoon St., Room 3069, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

• • •

Greenpeace has unveiled a new fuel-efficient car. The group commissioned Swiss engineers to work on the new model, which is adapted from a Renault European model. The new car's fuel consumption is almost 50 percent less than the original model. Greenpeace executive director Thilo Bode says that "improving fuel efficiency is a vital measure [in reducing greenhouse gas emissions] … but there must also be a rise in fuel prices and greater investment in public transport." (Peace and Social Justice Center newsletter)

ning after corn harvest we had orientation sessions each Wednesday," Epp says. The men learned about Guatemala's religious life, culture and recent political struggles.

Epp and the Freemans strongly affirmed these "people-to-people bridges," as Epp calls the projects.

Group members returned with a personal connection to Guatemalan Christians. "One participant told me she prays for the people of Guatemala every day now," says Donna.

A work group brings a lot of enthusiasm back to the congregation, says Epp, providing a "critical mass" that doesn't happen when an individual goes and returns. But he adds, "Just going for two weeks and then coming back would not be an adequate approach if MCC did not have a long-term presence there." *Ardell Stauffer*

Sabbatical renews mediator for work in Northern Ireland

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—As Derek Poole guided a canoe in northern Minnesota with other seminary students, the Northern Ireland peace mediator discovered something that prepared him to return home to renewed violence and a collapsed peace process.

"The whole experience of study, meditation and time spent in a pristine wilderness setting put things in a new perspective for me. It was a week when I realized ... that I could trust God in a way that perhaps I had not been doing," Derek says.

Tom Price (MBM)

Derek Poole

He ended a year-long sabbatical at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary by participating in the Creation, Spirituality and Renewal course, led by Old Testament professor Perry Yoder. In Minnesota, Derek fulfilled his hopes for a one-year sabbatical: rest and theological reflection for continued ministry in Northern Ireland.

"In peace, justice and reconciliation work, you become very dependent on your own energy, creativity and imagination," Derek says. "You feel the urgency of everything. There was something about that week that helped me surrender [to God], to feel it is somehow all right."

The revelation came just in time. Derek, coordinator of Greenfield Community, a Christian fellowship working for peace, justice and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, and Arlene, his wife, had grieved over the end of the 22-month cease-fire early this year.

"When the cease-fire ended, we knew that was the beginning of the return to violence in our own country," Derek says. "All the grief returned—[for] people who ... have died, or ... been maimed for life."

In his work with Greenfield Community, Poole has sought to find an alternative to the violence of Catholic and Protestant paramilitaries. He continued that search in his studies at AMBS.

"My experience here has reaffirmed the value of the Anabaptist tradition, which is not well-known in the Irish context," he says. "I have been renewed in the hope that the radical view, this alternative vision of peace and justice, is not a futile thing."

The Pooles returned to Ireland July 28. Derek will begin a new assignment with Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland.

"It is an attempt to invite evangelicals to consider biblical themes of reconciliation, peace, mediation, justice and citizenship," he says.

"The reason I'm going back is destiny. It is simply being where God shows me. There's nothing brave about it, nothing romantic about it. It is just where I should be," he says.

"There are times when inside your bones, you know this is a call, a vocation, a sense of destiny. You have got to be faithful to that. I have a responsibility for what is going on there." *Tom Price*

The Evangelical Press Association awards scholarships to undergraduate students in their second or third year who are planning a career in print journalism. Completed applications must be received by March 15, 1997. For information contact the Evangelical Press Association, 485 Panorama Road, Earlysville, VA 22936.

• • •

A Conference on Whiteness and White American Culture will be held Nov. 8-9 at the Quaker Meetinghouse and Conference Center in Burlington, N.J. For information on the conference or the call for presentations, contact Center for Study, 245 West 4th Ave., Roselle, NJ 07203; (908) 241-5439; e-mail jeffhitchcock@gorgon.com; or the web site at http://www.euroamerican.org.

• • •

Urbana '96, to be held Dec. 27-31 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, will celebrate 50 years of the triennial student mission convention. Participants in the first mission convention, held in 1946 in Toronto, have been invited to attend this year's event. The convention, says director Dan Harrison, "focuses on the global mission of the church and ... the responsibility of every Christian to be a part of blessing every family on earth with the good news of the Lord."

• • •

"One out of seven Mennonite Church congregations was started since 1985," says Allan Yoder of Mennonite Board of Missions. Of these newer congregations, 69 percent began in urban areas. The 1995 Church Planting Statistical Report showed that English is the language of worship in 61 percent of congregations, Spanish the primary language in 21 percent of new church starts. New Mennonite Church congregations include Anglo (54 percent), Hispanic (22 percent), African-American (9 percent), Asian and Pacific Islander (7 percent), Native (3 percent) and others. (Mennonite Board of Missions)

Record

DEATHS

Esther Nickel Kauffman died July 15 in Marion, S.D., at age 77. She and her husband, Lloyd, served with COM in Taiwan 1970-79.

Pauline Unruh, 99, died Aug. 10 in Hesston, Kan. She was a nurse and served with her husband, William F. Unruh, with COM in India 1928-1939. She was a member of Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

MINISTERS

James Bartsch is youth pastor at Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Steve Conrad will be pastor at Trinity Church, Hillsboro, Kan., beginning Oct. 1.

Arnie Fehderau is pastor at First Church, Saskatoon.

David Feick is pastor at Hague (Sask.) Church.

Penny Frey is youth pastor at First Church, Halstead, Kan.

George Hoeppner is pastor at Zoar Church, Waldheim, Sask.

Job Martinez was ordained July 21 as pastor at Luz del Evangelio Menonita in Dallas, Texas.

Lloyd Miller, Goshen, Ind., is conference minister for Central District Conference, beginning Nov. 1.

Peter Neudorf is pastor at First Church (Greendale), Chilliwack, B.C.

Katherine Pitts is pastor at Salina (Kan.) Church.

Zebe Redekopp has completed his term as youth pastor at Peace Church, Richmond, B.C.

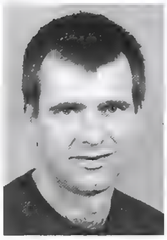
Janice Ropp was licensed April 14 as minister of counseling at Christ Community Church, Schaumburg, Ill.

Robin Walton was ordained and commissioned May 26 at Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio. Walton works with Doctors Hospital in Columbus.

WORKERS

Bruce Claassen, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., is finance assistant for Faith & Life Press.

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service


DeRyck

Trevor DeRyck, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MCC term in July in Winnipeg as an accountant.

Cari Friesen, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, began an eight-month term with Eastern Mennonite Missions Youth Evangelism Service in Brazil.

Laura Harms, Newton, Kan., is bookkeeper and office assistant for Faith & Life Bookstore in Newton.

Allen Jantz is assistant professor of education and director of teacher education at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Kasper

Arlo Kasper, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., began a nine-month MVS term Sept. 8 in Seattle as part of his sabbatical from teaching at Bethel College. Kasper, associate professor of theater arts, will work with home repair.

Marie Maugans is assistant professor of nursing at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Martha Sanders is associate professor of nursing at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Phil Stoltzfus will be assistant professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He replaces **Patricia Shelly**, who is on a four-year leave with MCC in the West Bank.

Eric and **Tracy W. Stutzman**, Salem (Ore.) Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Atbara, Sudan, as community development workers.

Goshen College seeks a **director of degree completion programs**. This is an opportunity for a creative educational administrator to help adults earn bachelor's degrees in organizational management or nursing. The director leads a staff of three professionals and one support person to develop, plan, market, organize and deliver effective programs. Some teaching may be required. The position offers a 12-month contract and reports to the academic dean. Candidates must have teaching and administrative experience in higher education as well as a commitment to Christian higher education and beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. M.A. required, Ph.D. preferred.

Send letters of application, resume and three references to **John Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http// www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be received until **Sept. 30**.

Camp Friedenswald seeks a full-time **program director**, beginning Jan. 1, 1997, or earlier. Remuneration includes salary, housing and comprehensive insurance. Responsibilities include summer program coordination, retreat and special event development and public relations. Bachelor's degree preferred. Youth ministry experience helpful.

Submit resume and three references **by Oct. 7** to **Christopher Gill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; (616) 476-9744**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **staff attorney**. Qualifications include a J.D. degree from an accredited law school, license to practice, membership in good standing with the applicant's state bar association, and willingness and ability to become licensed in Indiana. Knowledge of the health-care industry, managed care organizations and insurance products is preferred. Professional work ethic, excellent communication skills, and an understanding of MMA's mission as part of the Mennonite church and related denominations are required.

Direct inquiries, letters of application along with resume and references to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; 1-800-348-7468; fax (219) 533-5364**.

Goshen College invites applicants for a two-year position in **applied mathematics and computer science** to begin January or August 1997. Depending on program growth, a long-term position is possible. A master's degree and graduate study in applied mathematics and computer science are required; a Ph.D. in mathematics, computer science or a related area is preferred. Responsibilities include teaching introductory and advanced courses. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, seeks faculty committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send a curriculum vitae and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http:// www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

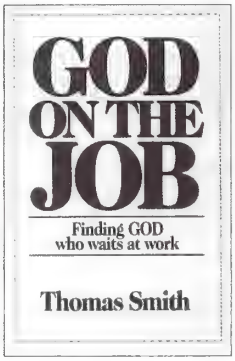
Reviews

BOOKS

FINDING GOD AT WORK

God on the Job: Finding God Who Waits at Work *by Thomas Smith (Paulist Press, 1995, 180 pages)*

Reviewed by Wally Kroeker, editor of The Marketplace, *Winnipeg*


GOD
ON THE
JOB
Finding GOD
who waits at work
Thomas Smith

It's not always easy to find God at work, especially if you aren't looking. Thomas Smith aims to help.

Since God is everywhere, says Smith, God is also present at work, no less than at home or at church. The task for Christians, then, is not to try to bring faith to work but rather to discover "the Godpresence that is already there." Only when we find God in the actual routines and tasks of a job and discover that work itself has value in building God's kingdom, he writes, will we develop an integrated, mature faith.

Smith, a manager in the airline industry, shows how regular working folk—like photographers, mechanics, secretaries, electricians and boxmakers—play out their roles in the economy of God.

Sometimes he pushes it too hard, as when he tries to prove an analogy between manufacturing and creation and between service work and redemption. If you work on an automotive assembly line, he reasons, you can better identify with God as creator because you too are making something. If you work in a showroom selling that car you are a service worker and can better identify with God the redeemer. "Service workers," he writes, "can relate to Jesus as redeemer in a special way because redemption is the ultimate service offered to humanity." Not all will grasp the connection so readily.

Nonetheless, Smith deserves a hand for applying the Incarnation to the realm of daily jobs that are sometimes mundane. His book helps nurture and celebrate a God who is present everywhere. Even at work.

HELP FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership: A Guide for Organizations in Changing Times *by Berit M. Lakey, George Lakey, Rod Napier and Janice M. Robinson (New Society Publishers, 1995, 216 pages)*

Reviewed by Mark Frey, Newton, Kan.

Using a river metaphor, the four authors liken the experience of social change organizations to the dynamism of rafting down white water; societal rapids, rocks, bends, twists and calm water are all a part of the nonprofit experience, and to navigate safely, the leadership must be both reactive and proactive in its steering. The river symbolism is powerful, resonating with African-American and other cultures which have long struggled for social justice.

The authors' goal is to provide guidance for social change groups in today's changing times. The book is about "using teamwork to build and maintain effective organizations … about the health of the organization itself … about working for a better world, for social change."

A product of the authors' extensive nonprofit experience, the book is also the result of hundreds of interviews with life-long activists. In addition, the authors draw wisdom from a wide spectrum of writers, from Starhawk the witch to M. Scott Peck.

After developing a theoretical framework for how social movements are organized and develop over time, the authors move into practical techniques for how organizations address both external and internal changes. While focusing on specific issues ranging from organizational structure to running productive meetings, the advice is general enough that it applies to almost any type of grass-roots organization, although less applicable for smaller groups.

Keeping ends and means consistent, their understanding is that our organizations must mirror the justice we work for. The goal is not just effective and productive organizations but inherently healthy ones that reflect social change goals.

While not written with churches in mind, much of the book is applicable. Discussions on power issues, supervision, diversity, long-range planning, productive meetings, conflict resolution and other issues are relevant.

TOURMAGINATION
MEXICO '96
November 14-25, 1996

Our Leader Cal Redekop
will introduce you to:

- * German-Speaking Mennonite Settlements in Chihuahua
- * Spectacular Copper Canyon via the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway
- * Tarahumara Indians, Paquime Ruins
- * Spanish-Speaking Mennonites in Sinaloa

Call 1-800-565-0451 or
write TourMagination

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg.# 1567624

The book is for people who don't want to read a lot of complex theory before finding practical ideas for bettering the organization. The ideas are backed by years of activist experience and the latest in social science theory.

Providing a "guidebook" for social change organizations rafting the water of our changing times, the authors highlight a wide range of points of interest for nonprofits, providing initial ideas and advice as a springboard for further research and discussion within the organization. Short, concise and written in plain language, it has value as a quick reference book on a variety of important nonprofit issues. I intend to put my copy within easy reach on the shelf for future guidance.

FAITHFUL 'BAD GUYS'

We Are the Pharisees *by Kathleen Kern (Herald Press, 1995, 160 pages)*

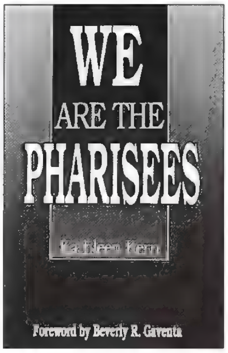
Reviewed by Edna Krueger Dyck, Newton, Kan.

Although the Pharisees have gotten unfavorable press in our churches, they weren't really as bad as we are led to believe. As Beverly Gaventa says in the book's preface, "They were good, faithful, religious people of their day." And when the author says in the title that *we* are the Pharisees, she's writing with the "good, faithful, religious people" of our day in mind.

Kern begins the first chapter in a powerful, thought-provoking way with a modern-day encounter of two individuals—one a pimp working the streets of a large city and one a law-abiding, church-going Christian. Without comment, she leaves the reader remembering the story that Jesus told of the two men who "went up to the temple to pray."

In a subsequent chapter, Kern deals with the religious and cultural life of first-century Palestine, and then cites instances in the Gospels and the writings of Paul where the Pharisees are actually looked on favorably. She follows this account with discussion of negative accounts of the Pharisees in the Bible, focusing on Matthew 23, where Jesus expresses some strong feelings about them.

In chapters 5, 6 and 7, Kern gets to what I consider the real message—what in the preface she calls her "Pharisee rant." From exclusivity and self-righteousness in the workplace and church to hard-heartedness and nitpicking, she points out flaws and faults in our church-going Christianity. She wants to show that "most human beings, Christian or otherwise, possess the same weaknesses for which Jesus criticized the Pharisees."



Kern feels strongly about anti-Semitism and points out in a detailed chronology humankind's guilt of this sin. Using concrete examples, she shows where, for instance, *The Living Bible* uses a subtle form of anti-Semitism. She challenges the reader to become aware of casual references to Judaism and Pharisaism in church and religious language that might be considered derogatory.

The book would be useful for discussion in adult education classes. It is well-researched and well-written. Each chapter has a set of discussion questions.

With obvious passion Kathleen Kern has exposed some little-known facts about these "bad guys" of Jesus' day and in this book she has held the light Jesus shed on their activities on our own culture and time.

CHRISTIAN HEALING

Caring for the Whole Person *by E. Anthony Allen, M.D. (MARC, 1995, 95 pages)*

Reviewed by Marilynn A. Strayer, M.D., Bloominville, Ohio

This little book delivers a strong message. It directs Christian healers as well as the whole church toward an integrated ministry of evangelism, healing and service for the "whole person." The author supports his vision with Scripture from Christ's ministry and his commission to his disciples.

I like the author's premise and feel it does speak to a split in the training vs. faith of many Christian care-givers and healers. However, his early chapters are at times confusing and difficult to follow. There are broad, complicated statements and sweeping generalizations without explanation. He packs so many concepts into such a small space that I found myself feeling overwhelmed and putting the text down for a breather rather than wanting to read on. Another concern is my impression that the author believes all people will be physically healed if their faith is strong enough, which I don't think Jesus promised.

Chapter eight gives excellent examples of the concepts in action, plus descriptions and case studies from the author's program in Jamaica. It made me want to get a firsthand look and focused his concepts.

I feel that Mennonite healing institutions today, as well as the work of conscientious objectors in hospitals in the past, approach these concepts. However, it will be a difficult program to implement fully in North American communities due to the power-driven structure and materialistic nature of Western society, and often the church as well. This book will present a challenge to draw us all toward following more closely the concepts Christ gave us 2,000 years ago.

Resources

- **The Amish: Origin and Characteristics 1693-1993** contains the proceedings of the 1993 international gathering celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Amish movement. Available from Masthof, Route 1, P.O. Box 20, Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543-9701; $25 U.S.
- **An Introduction to Old Order and Conservative Mennonite Groups** by Stephen E. Scott (Good Books, 1996, $8.95 U.S.) uses anecdotes and photos to tell the history of these two groups.
- **Daughter of Olapa: The Music of Carol Ann Weaver** is a CD of music based on four African women legends and four songs with text by poet Di Brandt. Available from Carol Ann Weaver, 132 Avondale Ave. S., Waterloo, ON N2L 2C3, or from Good Books; $17 U.S./$19 Cdn. ppd.

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 511
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

A holy calling

September is a time of beginnings for many of us. In the church, a new year of Sunday school begins. Let's use this time to renew our commitment to Christian education.

Sunday schools began as a way of reaching out to poor children who had no access to Christian education in their homes. Children of church members learned about the Bible and following Jesus from their parents in the home.

Today, as Linda Cannell points out (page 7), we depend on Sunday school for most of our Bible learning. As a consequence, we are becoming more and more biblically illiterate. This is not because Sunday schools are doing a bad job of teaching the Bible; rather, learning from such a large and complex book requires more time than the 10-15 hours per year (Cannell's estimate) regular church attenders usually receive.

Compare those hours with the number of hours we and our children spend watching TV, for instance. If we are serious about learning how to live a life faithful to the Bible's teachings, we must devote more time and energy to Christian education.

We need to practice learning in our homes, both adults and children. Resources like the devotional booklet *Rejoice* are helpful. For teens, the Generation Why books are excellent Bible studies. Times of learning need not be formal. As we talk in our families about various issues or situations, let's ask one another what the Bible might say to these.

> *If we are serious about learning how to live a life faithful to the Bible's teachings, we must devote more time and energy to Christian education.*

When I talk with people about what is most important about their church, one recurring item is Christian training for their children. (They usually don't mention Christian training for themselves.) They may say they don't see much connection between their congregation and our denomination, the General Conference Mennonite Church. Yet they want good Sunday school materials for their children. And often they like to sing out of a good hymnal.

I tell them those resources would not be possible unless our churches organized as a denomination and combined energies to produce such fine products as the Jubilee curriculum and our *Hymnal: a Worship Book.*

I don't use the word "fine" lightly. I have been teaching sixth through eighth graders in my congregation, using Jubilee. I can testify that this material is excellent. It focuses on Scripture, offers many approaches to teaching it, employs helpful teaching aids and presents a knowledgable understanding of this age group and what approaches will be most effective with these students. I've enjoyed using the material, and the kids have learned much about the Bible and how we might apply its teachings today.

Gifts for teaching: Nearly every congregation seems to have trouble finding enough people to teach Sunday school. It's such a widespread problem that we often make jokes about it (see page 9). Some of us don't want to expend the energy it takes to prepare a lesson. Others don't feel capable of doing it. Yet Christian education is such an important work that we need to lift up those working in it and honor them. We need to take the time to discern who among us has gifts for teaching, then help them find whatever training they need to better practice their gift in our churches.

Rosella Wiens Regier writes about her journey in Christian education (page 3). She received many gifts along the way that confirmed her call to teaching and encouraged her to try new tasks. How many others among us have such gifts but need the nudging, the encouragement from the rest of us?

Teaching in the church is a holy calling. James goes so far as to warn his readers, "Not many of you should become teachers ... for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness" (James 3:1). Teaching is not to be taken lightly, yet it must be practiced. If the church is to remain alive and live faithfully, we will need to call out teachers for our children as well as for adults.

For healthy individuals, healthy families and healthy churches, let's give more attention to educating ourselves about the way of Jesus. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

A shock of grace, passion / p. 5

Voting rights, voting wrong / p. 10

Dangerous blankets / p. 15

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 19
OCTOBER 8, 1996

LIBRARY

THE gender CHASM OVERSEAS

- Service that's 'women-friendly' (page 3)
- At the bottom of the social heap (page 6)
- Gender is a factor in each culture (page 7)

Prologue

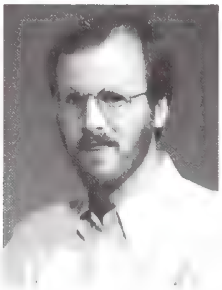
Here in North America we hear talk of the "gender gap," which refers to the differences in the ways men and women are treated. For example, women are paid on the average about 75¢ for every dollar a man is paid for the same work.

If we have a gender gap, then in many countries overseas, there is a gender chasm. Mennonite Central Committee, the development agency many Mennonites and Brethren in Christ support, is learning that their workers have to take this chasm into consideration when they do development work.

Our first feature (page 3) presents Nepal as an example of where MCC is doing such work with women. Pearl Sensenig also writes about how former bar women in the Philippines are affected by the world economy (page 6). Companies regularly move their operations to wherever the labor is cheapest, giving little consideration to the welfare of their workers.

Deb Simpson (page 7) writes about a three-year project in which MCC is analyzing how gender issues affect its overseas programming.

Ellen Kroeker's poem (page 5) draws inspiration from a musk-ox.



J. Daryl Byler looks at what the Bible says about voting (page 10), Rich Preheim comments on Mennonites' need to say why we do what we do (page 11), and J.B. Miller offers advice to people in their 40s or 50s about retirement planning (page 12). *gh*

Next issue: 50 years of Mennonite Voluntary Service

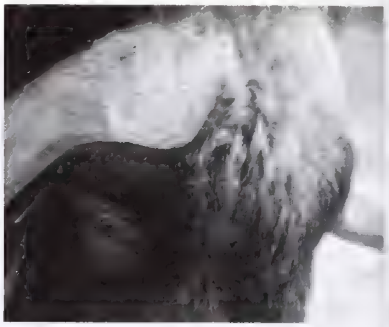
Cover: Photo by John Leckie (MCC)

Contents

FEATURES

3 Service that's 'women-friendly'

A development agency in Nepal learns how to work with women to better meet their needs.



5 A shock of grace, passion

A poem

6 At the bottom of the social heap

The world economy creates difficulties for former bar women in the Philippines, now that U.S. bases are gone.

7 Gender is a factor in each culture

Mennonite Central Committee is looking at how gender issues affect its overseas work.

DEPARTMENTS

8 Letters
10 Bible
11 Commentary
12 Fiscal health
13 News
19 Record
22 Reviews
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

A development agency in Nepal learns how to work with women to better meet their needs.

SERVICE THAT'S "women-friendly"

Pearl Sensenig

Amid panoramic mountain peaks that attract adventure-seeking trekkers from around the world, Nepali women toil in their terraced fields. As they press rice seedlings into the soil, they worry whether the crop will yield enough to feed their families. However, although much of the farming in Nepal falls to women, when United Mission to Nepal (UMN) offered agricultural training, few women attended.

Nepali women have little opportunity to attend school. But when UMN, of which Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a member, offered academic scholarships, few females applied.

Therein lies the dilemma: How can an aid agency develop programs that assist women, who tend to be the "poorest of the poor" in Nepal?

In 1990 UMN created the Advisory Group on Nepali Women to ensure that its 35 health, education and development programs meet women's special needs. To show its importance, the advisory group was placed structurally under the executive office. Results of the group's work are beginning to show.

The UMN agricultural training program was made "women-friendly" by shortening the sessions so women could attend while juggling their many family responsibilities. The training seminars are held closer to villages; when overnight travel is required, UMN staff reassure families that women will have a safe place to sleep. Now nearly 25 percent of participants are female.

Different levels: UMN's educational program reserves half its scholarships for women, but staff have to find ways to encourage women to ask for these. This requires "work on so many different levels," says Dorothea Vestal, a UMN staffperson from Norway who works with the advisory group.

In Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, UMN has helped establish a YWCA. One room is reserved for some 20 schoolgirls to come and do their homework daily from 4 to 6 p.m. UMN also works to combat the negative messages Nepali women receive. Some Nepali proverbs, for example, compare women to shoes, considered low

> ***"The best way to address the family's and community's needs is to give women more opportunities and help them raise their status."***
>
> **Edgar Metzler**

More than a slave or a workhorse: *Pictured are Tuleshowri, the housemother, and two young residents of the Kathmandu YWCA. United Mission to Nepal helped established this YWCA in 1993 to provide a safe place for women to stay when they attend seminars in Nepal's capital, thus alleviating a major barrier to including women in meetings. The YWCA also provides temporary shelter for abused women and girls.*

and dirty, or to dogs. UMN has produced a calendar that shows women in positive roles—one month depicts women voting in an election, another a woman learning to read.

UMN staff acknowledge some people find the advisory group's activities threatening. But Edgar Metzler, UMN executive director, says, "The best way to address the family's and community's needs is to give women more opportunities and help them raise their status."

And he adds, "From a Christian standpoint, it is much better for children to grow up in a family where the mother is seen as more than a slave or a workhorse." Edgar is jointly appointed to his position by MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions.

Dorothea says, "Things look different depending on gender. When UMN plans programs, staff have to see things through women's eyes so they know how to encourage them."

Within the vast UMN network, made up of expatriates from 39 agencies in 18 countries and some 2,000 Nepali staff, workers find informal ways to assist women. For example, Nepali women who suffered from incontinence after difficult deliveries were often abandoned by their husbands. The simple operation that can alleviate the problem was unavailable to them, dooming them to a life of hardship. Today a UMN-affiliated hospital offers the surgery. Nepali women in the town of Tansen embroider cards to earn income for themselves. Women in Europe sell the cards and a portion of the proceeds helps pay expenses for Nepali women who need the operation.

As women make some progress, new challenges emerge. More Nepali are moving to cities, and alcohol, traditionally used in festivals and weddings, is now being consumed more frequently. Consequently, domestic abuse is increasing. As in many Asian countries, AIDS infections in Nepal are on the rise, proving deadly for women lured into prostitution. And the custom of dowry, which requires the bride's family to give goods or money to the groom's family, is being adopted from nearby India. This too can lead to abuse when the woman's family is unable to pay.

Hopeful signs: But there are also many hopeful signs. Since 1990, when Nepali Christians gained more freedom to organize churches, women's plight has received increased attention. Draupadi Rokaya, a Nepali

"We need men with a heart to understand women."
Draupadi Rokaya

Christian woman, has begun an organization to assist women. She is also working to raise general awareness of women's issues, explaining, "We need men with a heart to understand women." Nepal, still a fledgling democracy, is also enacting more laws to protect women.

But ultimately the best hope lies within Nepali women themselves. "More and more Nepali women are daring to ask for advice," Dorothea says.

She tells how a mother came to discuss her daughter's family problems. "Women have started to think, This shouldn't be happening to me. Earlier they were fatalistic, thinking I just have to accept this," she says.

Pearl Sensenig works for Mennonite Central Committee Communications.

A SHOCK OF GRACE, PASSION

Ellen Kroeker

Like my big-boned Grossmama,
this musk-ox wears its coat
unfashionably long, yet
awkwardly high, revealing
legs sinewed to toughness.
She moves ponderously
across the bowl of the valley,
the late night breathing
through the quiviut.
Her bony brow holds the heft
of memory, a weight of shadowed
winters. But, just as her density
settles the slow pace
of the land, this musk-ox
swirls and gallops
away in a shock of grace
and passion, like a Mennonite
woman who, suddenly swooshing
her skirts in a similar,
lascivious swirl, drops the years,
the dark tradition, proves
the buoyancy of bones.

Ellen Kroeker lives in Lawrence, Kan.

The world economy creates difficulties for former bar women in the Philippines, now that U.S. bases are gone.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE social heap

Pearl Sensenig

Is an inexpensive dress a good thing? Three years ago, before going to the Philippines as a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) volunteer, Cheri Peele would have said yes. Now she would ask a few more questions.

In 1993 Cheri went to Olongapo to work with women involved in the sex trade that had catered to U.S. servicemen in the Philippines. But Cheri found that although the U.S. bases are closed, the world economy is creating new hardships for women formerly caught in prostitution who remain "at the bottom of the social heap." Cheri completed her assignment this summer convinced her work for justice must continue here at home in North America.

Most of the seedy hotels, bars and massage parlors that once lined Olongapo's streets are boarded up now. Following the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo and a Philippine Senate vote not to renew the bases' lease, the United States closed all its Philippine military bases by November 1992.

In the early 1990s some 16,000 bar women were active in Olongapo; now there are fewer than 500. Women who remain—mostly in their late 30s or older, with no spouses, and children to support—are having a difficult time finding jobs that pay adequate wages.

The former U.S. Subic Bay base near Olongapo is now a "special economic and free-port zone" that offers tax breaks and other concessions to entice foreign companies, manufacturing everything from shoes to telephone parts, to locate here.

From 1991 to 1995 Buklod, the organization with which Cheri worked, offered sewing classes to prepare former bar women for the new jobs that would come to the area. (MCC and several Philippine groups started Buklod in 1987 to assist women in the sex industry.) More than 80 women attended three-month classes in basic sewing at Buklod; some also attended high-speed sewing classes.

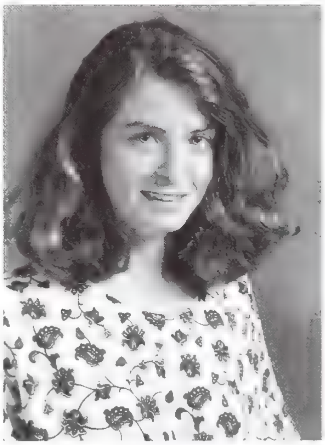
However, the women trained by Buklod are having difficulty getting hired. When the women apply for jobs, they discover that factory owners prefer younger women whom they view as more dexterous and easier to exploit.

Cheri did a feasibility study to see if Buklod could help the women set up their own factory. She studied local markets and discovered that if the women were to buy cheap cloth from China to sew into simple dresses to sell locally, they might have a viable business.

"It's mind-boggling," Cheri says. "The manufacturing process has many steps, yet I found that if you pay minimum wage at only one step, as we would to the Buklod seamstresses, you will still face stiff competition because so few factories pay minimum wage to any of their workers."

This experience has changed Cheri's outlook on shopping here at home. "Before, when I went to the mall and saw something on sale, I'd think, Great, I can save money. Now when I see something that seems too cheap, I feel torn about buying it," Cheri says.

"If I look at the tag, I'm sure to see it's made in the country with the current worst labor practice. The location keeps changing because companies shift their factories to wherever they



"We may feel we have no control over how much workers are paid in the Philippines, but we can ask questions about our spending habits."

Cheri Peele

can earn the most profit," Cheri says. "I know that when I buy I'm supporting these practices and contributing to lost jobs here at home."

To change this situation, says Cheri, means to "change our lifestyles. We may feel we have no control over how much workers are paid in the Philippines, but we can ask questions about our spending habits. After all, the flip side of production is consumerism."

Cheri says she is leaving her MCC assignment with "more questions than answers." This fall she will continue examining these questions as she begins studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Cheri's assignment came home in other ways, too. Cheri, who is from a Virginia military seaport town, saw parallels between her own life and those of the women she worked with in the Philippines.

"Around World War II my grandparents moved off their farm in North Carolina to get jobs near the military base in Virginia," she says. In the following years the military pumped money into the local economy, resulting in a good public school system from which Cheri benefited.

On the other side of the world in the Philippines, many poor rural women moved to areas around the U.S. military bases, also hoping to better their lives. However, the U.S. military's impact on their lives was quite different.

Cheri is a member of Heritage United Methodist Church in Virginia Beach, Va.

Pearl Sensenig works for Mennonite Central Committee Communications.

GENDER IS A FACTOR IN EACH CULTURE

Mennonite Central Committee is looking at how gender issues affect its overseas work.

Deb Simpson

Mennonite Central Committee is in the midst of a three-year effort to analyze how gender issues affect its overseas programming. "We are trying to discover how MCC's work impacts women and men differently," says Gwen Groff of the MCC Peace Office.

The study grows out of MCC's 75 years of experience, which have shown how challenging it can be to plan appropriate programs that meet the needs of the whole community. In one location, for example, MCC had asked communities to appoint one member as a "health promoter." Most selected men because it was easier for them to travel to receive training. Yet women were most often the ones who cared for sick family members and were reluctant to consult the male health promoters. This difference in cultural roles hindered the health program's effectiveness.

Gwen Groff and Deb Simpson, an MCC Peace Office worker based in Switzerland, are working to produce a set of questions that MCC workers can ask themselves as they consider ideas for new programs. These questions may include, "What is the nature of men's and women's participation in the activities with which MCC is involved in the community?" and, "Will MCC's involvement have an impact on the workload of women? Of men?"

"Gender roles are different in every culture, so as North Americans we can't assume we know what our impact will be unless we ask questions that help us understand the gender roles in any particular culture," says Gwen. "Men's and women's roles are always interdependent, so we can't just work with women or just with men. We have to work in consultation with both."

In July Gwen and Deb traveled to El Salvador for the first of three country studies. Next month they will visit Zambia. A trip to India is planned for 1997. These country visits are providing opportunities to develop and test the proposed questions in three different geographic regions.

"Many good tools for gender analysis are already available. The main reason for coming up with our own set up questions is so we can integrate MCC's faith perspective and style of service," says Gwen.

MCC's set of gender questions is scheduled to be completed in 1997, in time to be incorporated into MCC's 1997-98 program planning.

Deb Simpson, Toronto, is a member of Toronto United Mennonite Church.

Letters

USE THE NAME MENNONITE

The enclosed tracts were in a discarded plastic bag returned to one of our major food markets for recycling. The market saves the bags for us. We take the usable ones to our city's emergency assistance center (Lutheran Social Services). Each morning 300 to 400 of those bags are used as receptacles for food for the hungry. Our congregation also supports the purchase of food for such distribution, over $10,000 per year.

What can you tell me about the publishers of these tracts ("Church of God in Christ Mennonite")? How are they connected or related to General Conference? Their history? Background? The content of the tracts looks good to me. We need such reminders, don't we?

After reading the letters in your Aug. 27 issue, I detect some confusion in the minds of some writers about how to define "evangelical." In a few days I wish to elaborate on some of that disturbing confusion.

Meanwhile, I have two very serious, very earnest recommendations.

1. No normally affiliated congregation—General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church—should ever be permitted to omit the word "Mennonite" in the congregation's name. Such omission is shameful.

2. The best name for the national church, when merged or integrated, is "Evangelical Mennonite Church in America." *Adrian H. Amstutz, Long Beach, Calif.*

Editor's note: *Anyone want to answer Mr. Amstutz's questions? You may write him c/o* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

LOVE THE SINNER, HATE THE SIN

Re "Conference Models an Inclusive Church" (Aug. 13 issue, page 13): It appears to me this conference was held to make the homosexual and lesbian lifestyle an approved way of life.

First of all, let me say that I believe the church should love the sinner but must hate the sin. The church is responsible to point out sin, call it sin and show the way of becoming a new creature in Christ. This is no doubt coincidental, but as I write this letter, there are two men on a TV show who have lived the homosexual lifestyle, have now accepted Jesus as Lord, are now married and living a life as God intended it to be.

Quite a few years ago (like two or three editors ago), I wrote an article concerning this way of life. It was not acknowledged or used. I cannot in any way believe this lifestyle is approved by our Lord and Savior. Have the promoters of this conference discarded God's Holy Word? It would not surprise me if soon there will be "born again" prostitutes, yes, even adulterers and murderers. These sins are all listed together, and if practiced, will keep people from being able to enter the kingdom of heaven if they have not repented.

I am not a perfect Mennonite, just a sinner saved by grace, but one who believes the Bible is the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. I also believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God and that he will return for his own. I also believe in the endless lake of fire for the unsaved.

Please consider the following Bible verses (using the NIV): 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (following verses go into detail that there is hope for all of the above sins if we are washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ), Matthew 15:19, Ephesians 5:3, Revelation 20:8.

There are other verses which spell out sexual sins: Romans 1:24-28, Leviticus 18:20, 22-24; 13:10. There are others, but this should make the point I am trying to convey.

It seems so many talk only about the love of God, and this is tremendous, because God loves everyone but hates any sin. However, our God is also a God of wrath. As you read through the Bible, there are probably as many verses regarding judgment and the wrath of God as there are about the love of God.

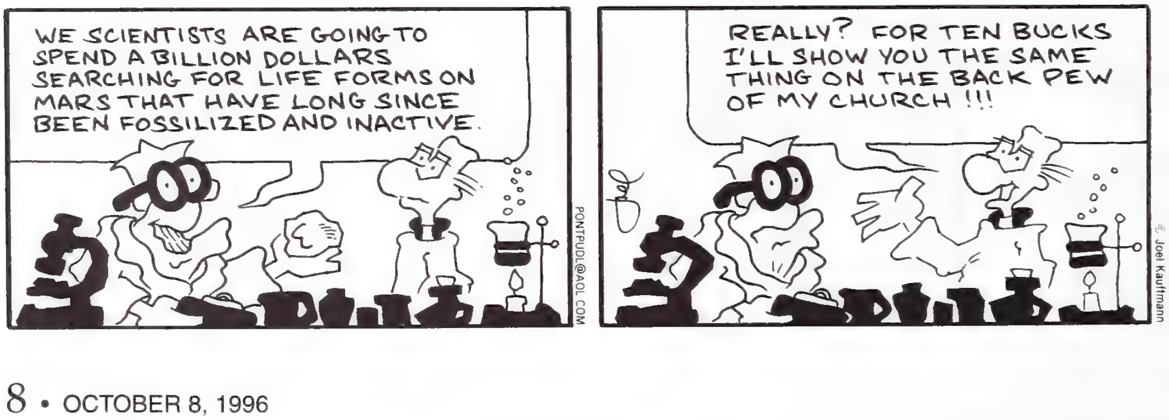
I am concerned that, according to the article, there are 48 General Conference, Mennonite Church and Church of the Brethren congregations that publicly welcome gay, lesbian and bisexual members. May our Lord Jesus convict each of us to love everyone but at the same time share with those who practice sin that they can be forgiven and walk the Christian walk with Christ's help. *Charles Habegger, Berne, Ind.*

UNLEASH THE GIFTS OF HELPS

Ray Bystrom's article ("Called by God in Whatever You Do," Aug. 27 issue, page 6) has, for me, the "feel" of a defense, well researched and laced with emotional tension, not unlike what I can only try to imagine is faced by those working the stock exchanges of the world. Perhaps that is what grips me and gives that extra vitality to my second reading of it.

Despite the choice of disputable vocabulary , I had the sense that Ray wishes to clear aside ambiguity, or anything else that would frivolously or deceptively entangle or distract us from the pursuit of passionate commitment to excellence, "in whatever your hands find to do," so that

Pontius' Puddle


WE SCIENTISTS ARE GOING TO SPEND A BILLION DOLLARS SEARCHING FOR LIFE FORMS ON MARS THAT HAVE LONG SINCE BEEN FOSSILIZED AND INACTIVE.
PONTPUDL@AOL.COM
REALLY? FOR TEN BUCKS I'LL SHOW YOU THE SAME THING ON THE BACK PEW OF MY CHURCH !!!
© Joel Kauffmann

we might have courage to act, despite our conviction that we have not yet reached the fullness of maturity, and "do it with all your strength, ... as unto the Lord."

In other sections we are faced with the issue of heresy, real and imagined. Into this fray I would add what may be a distracting question, admittedly, also bordering on heresy, though not presented with any desire to be heretical: What do you suppose would happen if we were to call forth, and set free to serve, those from within our midst who have the gifts of helps, interpretations and coaching (as both opponents and supporters of the likes of Tom Peters or Tony Robbins will allow seems to be operating in these men, for good or bad)? If we unleashed men and women of sound faith and spirit, after having been tested themselves, would we begin to see a fresh awakening of the work and Spirit of God in our midst in places previously missed or overlooked? Would we be preparing men and women to meet and address the very leadership and visionary needs in the world today? Would God release afresh a movement of his Spirit, producing people empowered by his love, through faith in him, by grace furnished from God's overflowing abundance? Would we live to see the power and authority of God's love, working in harmony with the goodness and knowledge received and added to the faith, blossom forth into a powerhouse of goodness and righteousness, the likes of which we pray for and lament our lack of?

Thanks for alerting us to the messages preached by our friend and brother Gerald Gerbrandt at the consultation on pastoral and theological leadership (page 14), calling us "to fall in love with Jesus Christ," with a high level of integrity. These words, though unfamilar to my ears, relative to Gerald, ring powerfully true in my experience of him as a brother and a colleague in the ministry. I have seen the loving passion he has for the church as a whole, for individual members within that church, and his unswerving devotion to our Lord and brother, Jesus Christ. Would it be possible, or useful to the larger readership, to have these presentations of his published, even in digested form? *Clare Neufeld, Delta, B.C.*

continued on next page

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Botswana—I am attending two Bible classes a week, Mondays and Thursdays. We have Batswana leading the groups, but I find that as my Setswana gets better I am able to enter into the discussion more. I find myself really enjoying the preparation of the classes and being able to share some background to the studies.

The Thursday class is much more church leaders and older adults, and the discussion is great. The Monday class is made up of a number of young people who are shy about discussion and would rather memorize answers. Pray for these classes and the people that attend. I hope the students will let God's Word become a part of them.

God is working in people here, even though we don't often see the results. The daughter of the woman I shared a yard with in Mmadinare, now in her final year of high school, accepted the Lord just after Christmas. Over the years Poloko and I have talked about life. She attended Sunday school but had not made a decision for Christ. I was glad to hear she had made a decision to become a child of God and ask God's direction for her life. Pray for her as well. Life is not easy for young people in Botswana.

I continue to meet with my friend Mme Mmangwedi every Tuesday for Bible study and prayer. Some days we visit bereaved and ill church members to encourage them and pray for their healing. I appreciate this time to learn the way she works. I am learning to initiate prayer for healing the way Christians do so spontaneously here. It doesn't matter if you know the person; if they are ill you offer to pray for them. *Erica Thiessen, Commission on Overseas Mission/ Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker in Botswana*

MISSILES OR BEEF TO IRAQ

Jordan—At about the same time one group of Americans delivered cruise missiles to Iraq, another group of Americans, through Mennonite Central Committee, sent in cans of beef and school kits.

Those Americans who delivered the cruise missiles tell us they can land one exactly where they want, plus or minus a mere 50 feet. On behalf of the Americans who deliver the beef, I can say we can deliver beef with even greater accuracy than 50 feet.

We heard during the Persian Gulf War that each cruise missile costs around $1 million. How much do you suppose one of those things weighs? For discussion purposes, let's say each missile weighs one ton. For that same $1 million, I could deliver (with stunning accuracy), around 150 tons of beef to average Iraqi folk who are literally starving because of the international embargo. Never mind that at last count, the Americans had chucked in 27 cruise missiles ($27 million at 150 tons of beef per $1 million—do the math).

If you wanted to win the hearts and minds of a starving Iraqi, would you do it by (a) trying to blow his or her head off or (b) buying him or her a whole bunch of good meals? I know which I would prefer.

And think about the Americans who are footing the bills. Hardworking, tax-paying decent folks, just like you and me. Should they be satisfied with a missile delivery accuracy of only 50 feet, while at the same time beef delivery accuracy is so much better? And not only that, but having to spend $1 million for every ton of missile delivered seems to me outrageous. For the same money I could do 150 times better.

It seems cynical, I know, but after four years of living in the region and seeing the suffering endured by Iraqis, and knowing how absolutely forgotten they are by the world, and how every single other approach has been tried at least 10 times, why not try the food approach? *Paul Pereverzoff, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Jordan, who visited Iraq in February to help distribute MCC aid and to assess needs in Iraq for MCC*

HERMENEUTIC KEYSTONES

Perry Bush ("Drawing the Line on Who We Are," July 9 issue, page 6) has hit upon a true distinctive between evangelicals and Mennonites—the purely doctrinal position as opposed to the doctrinal and ethical position. But I believe the distinction goes deeper than that. I believe the two groups interpret the Bible in a fundamentally different way.

All major Christian groups can be distinguished from one another by their choice of a "hermeneutic keystone"—a text, tradition or set of concepts one uses to explain or interpret the Scriptures. All evangelicalism holds to a twofold keystone: The Nicene Creed and Luther's interpretation of Romans. The Mennonite keystone is the teaching of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount. From this fundamental difference comes all other differences between evangelicals and Mennonites, including differences in ethics and social action.

Does this mean that I, too, am calling evangelicals "heretics"? By no means. We need to recognize that evangelicals—as well as other Christian groups—are our brothers and sisters and as such we have a responsibility to them. First of all, we must encourage them to love and do good deeds as befits the community of Christ (Hebrews 10:24,25). Also, if we see some of the church falling into sin, it is our responsibility to warn them gently of the consequences of their sin, causing them to repent (Matthew 18:15-20; Luke 17:3-4, Galatians 6:1-2). Let us cease this wrestling with each other about the spiritual liveliness of evangelicals and instead discuss how we can improve their understanding and living out of Scripture. *Steve Kimes, Portland, Ore.*

Tell us what you think.

Send a letter to:
The Mennonite,
P.O. Box 347,
Newton, KS 67114,
fax (316) 283-0454
e-mail gordonh@gcmc.org

Bible

● ● ▼

Voting rights, voting wrong

What guidelines does the Bible give us for discerning how to vote for political leaders?

J. Daryl Byler

Even the muggy Mississippi air seemed to dance with anticipation that July evening in 1979. When the votes were finally counted, Charles Young became the first African-American since Reconstruction to be elected from east Mississippi to the state legislature. Thanks to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and a federal court redistricting decision, many Mississippians now knew they would have a voice in state government for the first time in more than 100 years.

Today, as I vacillate in my own ambivalence about voting, I remember the election evening excitement at Young headquarters just 17 summers ago. How easy it is to forget that the right to vote is a recent phenomenon for many Americans.

Still, voting is no easy matter. There is no biblical precedent of voting for political leaders. God chose the leaders. Sometimes, given the confusing choices today, it would seem simpler if that tradition continued.

And if we are to vote, it would be nice to have clear criteria to assess candidates. Paul offered a 14-point character checklist for choosing church leaders (1 Timothy 3:2-7).

But the Bible contains no similar checklist for political leaders. Indeed, many of God's picks had major character flaws. Moses murdered. Saul consulted a diviner. David committed adultery, then conspired to commit murder. Solomon had more money and marriages than a Hollywood movie star. Nor did God choose the most confident or extroverted, the oldest or strongest. Moses was riddled by self-doubts (Exodus 3:11–4:17). Saul hid when Samuel came to proclaim him king (1 Samuel 10:20-24). God bypassed seven sons of Jesse before choosing the teenage David (1 Samuel 16:1-13).

Rather, it was those "after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14) that received God's "vote" for political positions. It was those who, despite their many failures, were willing to carry out God's wishes (Acts 13:22).

Perhaps this standard seems difficult to discern. How are we to decide which candidates are "after God's own heart"?

Vast armies: If one considers what seems to matter most to God, this standard certainly includes defending the rights of the poor and oppressed (Exodus 3:7-9; Jeremiah 5:28), caring for the most vulnerable (Matthew 25:31-46), granting freedom to worship God (Exodus 5:1) and trusting God rather than amassing wealth or vast armies (Deuteronomy 17:16; Psalm 44:1-8).

Voting is not simply an act of evaluating candidates. It is also a time to re-examine our own commitment to what matters most to God.

If nothing else, this struggle to discern reminds us that voting, for Christians, is not simply an act of exerting our own wills. We are wrong to view voting as a power move to promote our interests alone.

Thus, voting is not simply an act of evaluating candidates. It is also a time to re-examine our own commitment to what matters most to God.

Finally, voting is one way to participate in the political process. Strengthening our local communities and consistently advocating for God's way of peace and justice—regardless of who is elected—are others.

J. Daryl Byler is director of Mennonite Central Committee's Washington office.

Commentary

Identity and mission

We need to be able to say why we do what we do.

Rich Preheim

Time for a pop quiz: What do you believe as a Mennonite? Why do you do what you do? And no cheating. Put away your Bibles and copies of H.S. Bender's *The Anabaptist Vision*.

For years we Mennonites have expressed our faith more through actions than words. We were, after all, "the quiet in the land." Who we are was evident in our clothes, our barn-raisings, our war resistance. Ironically, however, in this media age our actions are now forcing us to be able to explain our beliefs. To do so is essential for Mennonite identity as well as mission.

This was particularly evident this past summer when reporters from all over the world flocked to Boligee, Ala., where Mennonite Disaster Service was rebuilding an African-American church that was destroyed by fire, probably arson. In the course of their interviews, print and broadcast journalists inevitably gave MDS volunteers a pop quiz, asking, "Why are you doing this?"

To answer that question means being able to articulate one's faith. It's not a matter of giving a reporter a sound bite but of each person understanding for themselves why they do what they do.

There is a correlation between the depth and breadth of belief and the ability to express that belief. Articulation helps form belief: why we practice nonviolence, why we serve others, why we espouse simplicity and so on. Without being able to explain why, we run the risk of of doing things simply because that is the way they have always been done. In the face of societal pressures and the world's influences, that can lead to the church's stagnation, loss of identity and ultimately death.

Once we know what we believe, we apply that belief, such as serving with MDS, Mennonite Central Committee or a local soup kitchen. We don't serve to get recognition. But if we are effective—and we often are, at least in contrast to the rest of society—then recognition will come. And when a reporter puts a microphone in front of us, we need to be able to respond. Then we can testify to and glorify the Almighty, who calls us to put love into action.

> ***When a reporter puts a microphone in front of us, we need to be able to respond. Then we can testify to and glorify the Almighty, who calls us to put love into action.***

Millions of people: The MDS project in Boligee was unique, to be sure. MDS fielded dozens of media inquiries about its work on Mount Zoar Baptist Church. Workers were featured in CBS's news program *48 Hours*, the *New York Times*, *USA Today* and *U.S. News & World Report*. Reporters came from Canada, Germany, Japan and the Netherlands. As a result, aspects of Mennonite expression of the Christian faith were, to varying degrees, carried to millions of people around the world.

Opportunities for the rank and file to witness usually aren't so extraordinary—but they are increasing as the mainstream media realize the role of religion in people's lives. Relief sales often draw reporters. Local newspapers and TV stations are including more coverage of congregational outreach. And, of course, any public demonstration—such as against abortion, racism or militarism—is always a potential news story.

Christ called us to faithfulness in word and deed. Mennonites have emphasized the latter. Let's not overlook the former.

Rich Preheim is associate editor of Mennonite Weekly Review. *This is a Meetinghouse article.*

Carla Hunt (MDS)

Word and deed: *A cameraman films youth from Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church helping rebuild the meeting place of Mount Zoar Baptist Church in Boligee, Ala.*

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Everyone needs a retirement map

It's not too late to begin planning for retirement.

J.B. Miller

I once traveled from Lancaster, Pa., to New York City with a person who had never been there before. When she picked me up that morning for our weekend excursion I asked to see the maps. She told me she didn't have any, but she "sort of" knew where we were going.

I was not comforted by the thought of getting lost. The car needed gas before we arrived, and I bought maps. I wanted to know where I was going.

Sometimes when I talk to people about the need for retirement planning, I get this response: "I kind of know where I'm going." Or, "I have no idea how I will retire. I haven't put any money aside for retirement. It's all I can do to pay the mortgage and plan to put the kids through college."

My advice is, It's never too late to start planning for retirement.

No one disputes the fact that the sooner one begins saving for retirement, the easier it will be to meet certain financial goals. But for whatever reason, many North Americans between 40 and 55 have less money set aside for their eventual retirements than did their parents at a similar stage in life. Rather than look apprehensively at this new stage of life in 20 or 25 years, a person in this age bracket can still make great strides toward a financially satisfying retirement.

When most people think of retirement, they think of two or three primary income sources: governmental programs like Social Security, corporate pensions and savings. Each of these sources has been weakened in the last few years.

None of us is able to predict what role the government will play in helping fund our retirement. But there are several things we do know:

1. There will be some changes; otherwise, government programs will go bankrupt. Demographics are such that there will be fewer contributors and more recipients than the present programs will support.

2. The governments of the United States and Canada will provide some type of retirement program. While there are no guarantees of that, no one is seriously predicting the complete demise of a government-supported retirement program. However, there is also no doubt there will be cuts in government support, so personal planning for retirement is critical.

Disposable income: Savings have been affected because in the 1990s disposable income has not been rising rapidly. Real disposable income has been rising by about 1 percent through the 1990s, compared with the 1960s, when workers could anticipate annual raises of 3 percent or more after taxes and inflation.

And the last leg of the retirement stool is also changing. While many corporate employees retiring today participated in a defined benefit pension plan, today's employees are part of a defined contribution plan in which employees save for their retirement out of their own pretax earnings instead of company deposits. The most popular of these plans is the 401(k), which makes employees responsible for managing their retirement plan assets, daunting for the inexperienced.

Since you can't control what happens to governmental and private pension programs, there are at least three things you can control that will significantly impact your retirement:

- how long you are able and choose to work,
- how much you save,
- how wisely you invest your savings.

And retirement is still possible even if you don't have much savings at the moment. Here are several suggestions:

1. Make a plan. Figure out how much you think you will need, in today's dollars, when you retire. A professional planner can assist in this.

2. Begin a savings plan if you don't have one. Regardless of how little you save, it will grow over time. With the advantages of compounding, you will have something when you retire. If you are employed by a company with a tax-deferred savings plan, participate in that before you do any after-tax savings.

3. Manage your investments, but avoid the risk of being too conservative. Too many investments in certificates of deposits and bonds may not give you the returns you could get in alternatives, such as a well-diversified stock fund. On the other hand, avoid the risk of overly aggressive investments where you might lose a substantial part of your savings.

4. Consider delaying your retirement. Delaying retirement for three years from 62 to 65 can be beneficial. Retiring too soon also eliminates the most profitable accumulation years, since the benefits of compounding really take off in the later years of the investment period. If at age 50 you have $25,000 in savings and you add $5,000 annually, by age 62 you will have $221,000 at a 10 percent annual return. But if you delay retirement until 65 and save the $5,000 each year, your investments will grow an additional $91,000, to a total of $312,000.

5. Plan for activity during retirement. Rather than retiring and living off your savings, plan for volunteer assignments that may provide housing and other expenses during your early retirement years. This will delay the time when you have to dip into your investments to cover living expenses.

How much will you need for retirement? Financial planners tell me I will need about 75 to 80 percent of my preretirement income during my retirement years. What often follows are estimates about how much money I will need to save by the time I get to 65 or 70. These numbers often discourage me from doing anything.

While professional financial planners are important to assist in proper retirement planning, there are no rules that meet every person's need.

The key is that careful planning, even beginning as late as age 50 or beyond, will help you realize your goals. The earlier you start the better.

News

• • • ▾

Celebrants say that God and MDS were good

Boligee, Ala. (Meetinghouse)—Smiling joyfully, surrounded by cars, deacon Bobby Davis watched the never-ending stream of people fill the Mount Zoar Baptist Church yard.

"We got three churches here already," he said with a hint of amazement. "I feel iike shouting right here."

Eight months ago, the Mount Zoar yard held only charred ruins. The 35-member congregation's meeting place burned Jan. 11, one of three local churches to be destroyed in a rash of suspicious fires at African-American churches throughout the South.

But on Sept. 8, an estimated 200 people filled the tiny sanctuary to overflowing while at least that many more gathered outside. They had come for the dedication of Mount Zoar's new church building, erected with the significant contribution of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS).

The church was rebuilt this summer with financial assistance from around the world, and with the help of some 300 MDS volunteers who put in 10,000 hours of work.

"This church stands as a monument to God's love, as a monument to the power of God's grace, as a monument to partnering among God's people," MDS board chair Eldon King told the gathering.

The rollicking, 2 1/2-hour dedication service started with King cutting the ribbon and Tom Smucker, MDS assistant program coordinator, unlocking the building. MDS representatives were the second group to enter the church, following the choir, and were seated in front.

The sanctuary, with seating for 120, was crammed with people sitting and standing in the aisles, against the walls, even in the choir loft. The service was repeatedly punctuated by shouts of "Amen!" and "Yes!" and singing by the congregants as more than a dozen speakers made presentations. Their recurring theme was that God was good—and so was MDS.

Davis, expressing thanks for "our Mennonites," said, "This is not the Mount Zoar Baptist Church. This is Mount Zoar Baptist Church and Mennonite … The Mennonites is 100 percent in Mount Zoar."

"This is one of the greatest groups in the world," outgoing Boligee mayor Buddie Lavender said of MDS. "They'll lift you up, they'll bring you home."

Thomas Gilmore, a minister from Ensley, Ala., who gave the service's

Rich Preheim

Feel like shouting: *Members of Mount Zoar Baptist Church, Boligee, Ala., celebrate the dedication of their new building, rebuilt largely through the efforts of Mennonite Disaster Service.*

Inside the news

Missiles rain, aid to Iraq detained / p. 15

Haiti heads back into instability / p. 16

Liberian church leader feels like biblical exiles / p. 17

Drama reflects players' lives / 18

Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship of Vancouver, B.C., celebrated its 10th anniversary Sept. 1.

• • •

The body of Michael Miller, 32, who drowned while kayaking on the Animas River in Colorado on May 12, was recovered Sept. 2. His parents are Marilyn and Maurice Miller of Boulder, Colo. Marilyn is director of out-reach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries.

• • •

Mennonite Voluntary Service will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Markham, Ill., Oct. 26-27. Earlier this year there was a celebration at Welcome Inn in Hamilton, Ont. Alumni and friends of MVS are invited to gather for food, fun and reminiscing. For information, contact the MVS office at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams will send delegations to Haiti, the Middle East and Chiapas, Mexico, this fall. The Haiti trip is scheduled for Oct. 19-30, the Middle East trip for Nov. 1-12 and the Mexico trip for Nov. 9-26. Contact CPT at P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680; phone/fax (312) 455-1199; e-mail cpt@igc.org.

The 31st annual Ohio Mennonite relief sale, held Aug. 5-6, raised $208,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. At least 150 runners participated in the "Run for Relief" and more than 400 volunteers helped with the sale. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee's Self-Help Crafts program has changed its name to Ten Thousand Villages, effective Sept. 20, 1996. Over the next year, many shops throughout North America will assume the new name and graphic identity. (*A Common Place*)

• • •

Religion News Service reports that church attendance has sunk to its lowest level in two decades, according to research by the Barna Research Group of California. In telephone surveys of 1,004 U.S. adults 18 and over, Barna said 37 percent of Americans now report going to church on a given Sunday. Another researcher says that her studies show actual church attendance to be only half that indicated by telephone polls. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Mennonites in Elkhart County, Ind., played a key role in planning a celebration of diversity that offered a countermessage to a Ku Klux Klan rally held in Goshen, Ind., on Aug. 17. The Goshen Ministerial Association co-sponsored the diversity celebration. More than 1,000 people attended the event, which included children's activities, ethnic food, a prayer tent and international music. Several Mennonites spoke during the educational section that coincided with the Klan rally downtown. "Inti," a group made up of Goshen College students, was one of several groups to perform, and members of Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor served tostadas and other foods at a booth. Planners hope to make the celebration of diversity an annual event. (*Gospel Herald*)

main address, said, "The person who torched this church didn't know about the Mennonite disaster teams."

Because of the national and international attention and support given to Mount Zoar, Gilmore said the congregation must now support others nationally and internationally.

"You are no longer a little church," he said. "This world has been introduced to you and ... you got to be concerned about your brothers and sisters."

Mennonite support was also on visual display. About 100 green ribbons were strung across the front of the church and hung in the fellowship hall, sent by North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ, mostly congregations.

Tremendous financial support from organizations and individuals worldwide covered the cost of the Mount Zoar building, giving MDS extra funds for on-site operating and travel expenses, other MDS work in Boligee, a tithe to Mennonite Central Committee U.S.'s racism awareness work and a video on the MDS youth program. MDS also left $10,000 with Mount Zoar for long-term maintenance and insurance for the new church. The previous building was not insured. *Rich Preheim wrote this article for Meetinghouse, the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group.*

Extra funds benefit Boligee

Boligee, Ala. (Meetinghouse)—An ample supply of workers and funds allowed Mennonite Disaster Service's ministry to extend beyond Mount Zoar Baptist Church.

MDS came to Boligee to rebuild the church, one of three in the area destroyed by suspicious fires. (The other two churches were Quaker projects.)

But MDS did even more this summer: built a church addition, replaced a church roof and built four wheelchair ramps at private homes.

Because most of the $130,000 cost of Mount Zoar's new church was covered by non-MDS contributions, MDS had extra money, spending $15,000 on the additional projects. MDS has received more than $70,000 in contributions for the work in Boligee.

The extra labor came primarily from the 10 youth groups—about 200 workers—that spent a week in Boligee as part of MDS's summer youth program. "As we went along, we had surplus help, so we decided to do these [projects]," said construction foreman Virgil Kauffman. *Rich Preheim*

Rich Preheim

Many gifts: *The newly rebuilt Mt. Zoar Baptist Church building was one of several projects Mennonite Disaster Service was able to complete this summer in the Boligee, Ala., community thanks to the generosity of many donors.*

Missiles fall; aid to Iraq detained

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—As U.S. fighter planes rained missiles on Iraq, international officials debated whether blankets and canned meat posed a "security threat."

Paul Pereverzoff

Feeding the forgotten: *The chief nun and Mike Nahal of the Middle East Council of Churches unpack cans of beef in the Sisters of Charity storeroom in Baghdad, Iraq.*

Recent escalation of violence in Iraq will only increase its people's suffering, say Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers in the region.

International sanctions that are starving the Iraqi people were renewed Sept. 3 for another 60 days, as Saddam Hussein's forces invaded a Kurdish-controlled city in northern Iraq, and the United States retaliated with missile attacks. Earlier, the United Nations had discussed letting Iraq sell oil to buy much-needed food and medicine.

"The Iraqi people may not have been hurt directly by the U.S. missiles, but they are suffering terribly under continuing international sanctions," says Paul Pereverzoff. Sanctions have not softened Hussein's brutal reign.

Pereverzoff, co-director of MCC work in Jordan, visited Iraq in February and saw how ordinary Iraqis are being hurt by their government and by international sanctions imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

"I saw people selling anything they had—hearing aids, carpets, children's toys—to get money to buy food," says Pereverzoff.

Oil-rich Iraq had a fairly high standard of living before the Persian Gulf War. Recently, researchers working for the Food and Agriculture Organization found that as many as half a million Iraqi children may have died since 1991 because of the sanctions.

In February, 400 cases of MCC canned beef went to the residents of a mental hospital in Baghdad—the first meat they had eaten in more than a year.

"These are the forgotten of the forgotten of the forgotten," says Pereverzoff. "In any culture, people with mental illnesses are forgotten, in times of crisis even more so, and Iraqis as a people have been forgotten by the world."

Currently, 13,600 MCC school kits are being distributed to Iraqi children as the new school year begins. It took MCC more than a year to obtain U.S. Treasury Department permission to send these school supplies.

An MCC shipment of comforters is still being detained in Jordan as the U.N. sanctions committee deliberates over whether it can be allowed into Iraq. "I guess they're trying to decide if blankets can be dangerous," says Pereverzoff.

Ed Epp, who in 1991 visited the area that the Iraqi military recently attacked, says the Kurds are also among the world's forgotten people.

"The image of thousands of human beings coming over the mountain passes, carrying what they could, wearing their best clothes, walking through mud and snow, will haunt me forever," says Epp, who directs MCC's Middle East program.

Some one million Kurds became refugees because of the Persian Gulf War and its aftermath.

"In Iraq, [escalation of violence] will only make life more difficult for the innocent. It will sow the seeds of hatred and anger, not only in Iraq, but also in other Arab countries," says Epp.

"[Sending material aid] is a pragmatic response; theologically, too, we Mennonites cannot endorse violence. To follow Jesus is to follow peace." *Pearl Sensenig*

A hymnal of Crow indigenous hymns is being developed by a coalition of Christian groups on the Crow reservation. The hymns are being collected and recorded by David Graber, who worked on the hymnal *Cheyenne Spiritual Songs*. To date, 120 songs have been recorded. Dr. Hu Matthews of Wycliffe Bible Translators has helped with writing down the texts of the hymns. Contributions to the project can be sent to Crow Hymnbook Project, Rev. Rusty Strickler, Treasurer, Crow Community Baptist Church, Crow Agency, MT 59022.

• • •

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) will hold its annual convention Oct. 31-Nov. 3 in Winnipeg, on the theme "The Art of Business." Headliners are Laurie Beth Jones, author of *Jesus CEO*, Howard Brenneman, CEO of Mennonite Mutual Aid Inc., and Ben Heppner, a Canadian opera singer who will perform a benefit concert on Nov. 2. There will be a panel discussion on "Supporting the arts as an expression of faith," a reading by Ontario Mennonite poet David Waltner-Toews and eight tours exploring local art, cultural and industrial attractions. For more information, phone 1-800-665-7026.

• • •

Four peace activists in Great Britain were acquitted of charges brought against them after they broke into a British Aerospace factory on Jan. 29 and damaged a Hawk jet fighter supposed to be sent to Indonesia. The Liverpool jury accepted the four women's defense that they were using reasonable force to prevent a crime. The women had campaigned unsuccessfully for 2 1/2 years against the sale of the Hawk to the Indonesian air force, fearing it would be used against the civilian population of East Timor, which Indonesia has occupied for more than 20 years. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

The 30th annual Northern Michigan relief sale held Aug. 2-3 grossed $119,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. Five of the nearly 200 quilts went for more than $1,000 apiece. The top quilt sold for $1,500. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

March for Jesus USA and Concerts of Prayer International are calling cities to unite simultaneously in prayer on Sat., Oct. 26, 1996. For information, write March for Jesus USA, P.O. Box 3216, Austin, TX 78764; (512) 416-0066; fax (512) 445-5393.

• • •

***The Door* reports that E. Davis, Inc., is offering a unique new evangelism tool. The product's back panel says: "The 'I Love Jesus' air freshener freshens the air, enhances your surroundings and eliminates any unpleasant odors. Express your inner feelings of love and affection with a clean fresh scent." (*Salt of the Earth*)**

• • •

The latest words to be recognized by the Dictionary Society of North America as genuine English include "Afrocentric," "bejeaned," "cyberspace," "dis" (short for "disrespect," used as a verb), "downsizing," "global warming", "incenting," "karaoke," "microbrewery," "mosh pit" (place for "moshers"—dancers who slam and shove against each other), "nailbiter," "phat" (neat or nifty) and "supercollider." (*Editor's Workshop*)

• • •

Evangelical Press reports that the Abundant Life Christian Center is marketing a Halloween spectacle which it created. "Hell House" dramatizes real-life horrors ranging from abortion to teen suicide. The church is offering how-to kits for $149, plus a CD of sound effects for an additional $15. Last year's "Hell House" attracted 5,000 visitors who paid $5 each, netting the church a $17,000 profit. (*Christian Leader*)

Haiti heads back into instability

Akron, Pa.—Although official news is hard to come by even for those living in Haiti, one doesn't have to keep one's ear too close to the ground to know Haiti has lurched back into instability, says Dan Wiens, who co-directs Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) programs there.

Haitian military forces have begun reasserting themselves, and so far this time, peasant groups are not being cowed.

Some say there's not a machete left unsold in Port-au-Prince stores, Wiens reports.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide declared the military abolished during his brief return to the presidency (October 1994 to February 1996), but the act was never legalized.

Military officials do not report to work in the morning and have no formal role in the government. However, they have evidently kept themselves loosely organized even while in hiding, Wiens says, and they have retained their weapons.

Among the demands which have arrived at the presidential palace via audiocassette or letter is one for 21 months of back pay and another for the release of some imprisoned ex-military personnel.

With the first demand's delivery, apparently made the week of Sept. 1-7, the military promised no one would be safe on Port-au-Prince streets if they did not get what they wanted. People feared a bloodbath, Wiens says.

During that week, Wiens was caught in major traffic back-ups in the capital, while seeing United Nations tanks and troops on the streets. "There was all sorts of disorder, including tire-burning," he says.

At the same time, a coalition of peasant groups blocked Haiti's main north-south highway. Roadblocks are a common way Haiti's impoverished multitudes express their discontent.

On Sept. 9, President Rene Preval personally visited the roadblock and convinced the group to dismantle it. Preval has been holding the military somewhat at bay, coming up with money toward back pay.

Why has the military chosen now to act? Rumors abound; the most prevalent is that it hopes to embarrass the Clinton administration, reducing President Clinton's chances for re-election. The thinking, Wiens explains, is that if the military were to stage a coup, a Republican administration likely would not intervene, while Clinton probably would. *Emily Will*

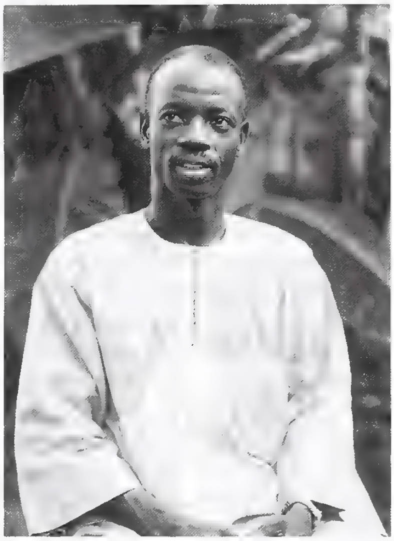
'We've waited so long for this day'

Lawrence Klippenstein

Ten people baptized in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, on Aug. 18 gather with friends and family following the service. They will become founding members of the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Zaporozhye. At left are Commission on Overseas Mission workers Peter and Susan Kehler. Willi Peters, pastor of the Mennonite church in Novosibirsk, Russia, and Peter Kehler performed the baptisms. *Carla Reimer*

Liberian church leader feels like biblical exiles

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—When he returns home after two years of study here, prominent Liberian church leader Jasper S. Ndaborlor sees himself functioning as did Nehemiah, who rebuilt Jerusalem's walls after the Jewish exile in Babylon.


Wayne Gehman

Ndaborlor

But before arriving Aug. 29 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) to begin work on a master's degree in theological studies, Ndaborlor acted much like King David. He hid in a number of places around Liberia's capital city of Monrovia to escape those who sought to use Liberia's renewed violence as an opportunity to kill him.

"I was living among my enemies," says Ndaborlor, who was in hiding from early April when the fighting broke out until West African peacekeeping forces regained control of the area in July.

Having previously faced a firing squad in 1990, challenged unfair legislation while serving as chaplain to the Liberian legislature and brought together Christians from a variety of denominations to work toward reconciliation, Ndaborlor is no stranger to danger in the name of his faith. That kind of strength of character was among the reasons why Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) decided to support Ndaborlor's theological training at AMBS.

"I have come to study and … to recover from what I have been through, being depressed both physically and spiritually," he says. "I also am here to share with others the experiences I have gained over the years."

The goal is to equip Ndaborlor for further work with the United Christian Association of Liberia, an MBM partner which Ndaborlor now serves as president. He is also pastor of the 550-member Monrovia Free Pentecostal Church and general chair of the Liberia Free Pentecostal Church Inc.

Ndaborlor served as senate chaplain from 1986 until June 1995. He was forced out after preaching a sermon broadcast on radio about how the practice of officials receiving bribes was detrimental to Liberians.

The worst violence in Liberia's six-year civil war broke out April 6 in Monrovia when a power-sharing plan among six factional warlords collapsed.

In the days after the violence resumed, about $1,500, to be used to pay workers, among other things, was stolen from Ndaborlor's church. His father, who had been hospitalized, died the day the fighting broke out. After he arrived in Elkhart, Ndaborlor learned that his father-in-law had died of malnutrition while trapped in Liberia's interior.

Ndaborlor's wife, Tewah, their six children and the more than 30 other children they care for, including nieces and nephews as well as orphaned children, remain in Liberia.

While in hiding, Ndaborlor found he could only wait on God. "Here I was sitting around doing nothing but praying and reading Scripture," he says. "It was a period for me to rethink what I had been doing and what I would continue to do in bringing relief and peace to my people and country."

Ndaborlor met his first Mennonite in 1986.The relationship has grown tremendously in the ensuing decade.

"I think [the Mennonites] have a clear vision about who we are and could assist us in the strengthening of our capacity for better services to our church, the Christian community and the country as a whole," he says.

"In the midst of finding yourself in a state of hopelessness, still there is a hope. My hope is in Jesus Christ," he says. "God's love is manifested in people and through people. [People need to know about] the loving hands of assistance … We have people who care about us." *Tom Price*

Goodfellow Rebecca Ingrams Pearson, a London insurance brokerage, says it's responding to news of life on Mars and the film *Independence Day* by offering an insurance policy that will pay on proven claims of persons abducted, partially eaten or impregnated by aliens. (*Newsweek*)

• • •

"Music for Life," a special concert celebrating the lives of those lost to AIDS, will be held Oct. 13 in Washington in conjunction with the display of the entire NAMES project AIDS Memorial Quilt. Mennonite Jane Miller's choral composition, "AIDS Quilt Memorial," has been chosen to be performed at this concert.

• • •

The Canada-Cuba Inter-Agency project, a coalition of churches and groups begun in 1994 in response to the U.S. government's Helms-Burton Act, says Canadians should boycott trips to Florida this fall if President Clinton implements the legislation. Helms-Burton would allow the United States to sue foreign governments, companies and individuals who have profited from property expropriated by the Cubans. (*United Church Observer*)

• • •

The *San Jose* (Calif.) *Mercury News* reported in a three-part series in August that in the 1980s, a San Francisco Bay area drug ring sold tons of cocaine to two Los Angeles street gangs and funneled millions in profits to the Central Intelligence Agency-sponsored contras in Nicaragua. The drug network opened the first pipeline between Colombia's drug cartels and the black neighborhoods of Los Angeles, eventually sparking a crack cocaine explosion throughout North America, the paper said. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Thirty-seven adults attended an Instituto Biblico Anabautista retreat in Birmingham, Ala., Aug. 31-Sept. 2. The students and their spouses came from Chicago, Dallas, Miami, Boca Raton, Fla., and Apopka, Fla. The retreat theme was "The Lordship of Christ in the Family."

• • •

The coordinators of the Mennonite Your Way program are seeking host homes for the eighth directory, which will be published in the spring of 1997. Contact Mennonite Your Way Directory 8, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538; (717) 653-9288 or (717) 653-1111. Registration closes Dec. 10.

• • •

Mennonite Disaster Service will hold three more annual meetings this fall: Region I in Morgantown, Pa., on Oct. 19, Region III in Denver Oct. 25-26, and Region V in Regina, Sask., on Oct. 26. For more information, contact the MDS office at 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-2210.

• • •

Mennonite Disaster Service units in the Carolinas, Virginia and Georgia are organizing to help clean up wind and rain damage caused by Hurricane Fran, which swept through the Southern states in early September, snapping trees, tearing off roofs and swelling rivers. Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, home to many Mennonites, was particularly hard hit by floods.

• • •

A resource packet including sermon ideas, children's activities and peacemaking stories is available for congregations planning to celebrate "CPT Sunday" on October 27 (or another Sunday). The call for a "CPT Sunday" originated from CPT's steering committee as a way to mark the third anniversary of CPT's Peacemaker Corps. To order, contact CPT, P.O. Box 6508; Chicago, IL 60680; tel./fax: (312) 455-1199; e-mail cpt@igc.org.

Drama reflects players' lives

Reedley, Calif. (MCC)—Using their own stories, a Mennonite Central Committee drama troupe offered their mostly white audiences a window on their experience with racism.

The troupe toured four Western states June 10 to Aug. 18. The project, "Our Voices, Our Lives," was intended to raise awareness of racism. It featured seven young adults from Mennonite churches across the United States—three Hispanic and four African-American.

Before hitting the road, the troupe started with a two-week creative session in which the actors talked and wrote about their own experiences of racism. The group worked under the direction of Gary Wood, executive director of PeaceTroupe, an organization that uses cultural arts to address justice issues.

"At the end of the first week we had 70 scenes," says troupe member Sherilee Williams of College Hill Mennonite Church in Tampa, Fla.

During the second week they narrowed the program down to five short skits, performed in combination with several readings and poems.

The troupe used a "forum theater" style, presenting a sketch, then leading the audience in discussing how racism had been portrayed. After a brief discussion, they invited audience members to take the place of the skit's central figure and try out their ideas for solving the problem.

Brian Bauman

Real-life stories: *From left, Sherilee Williams, Gary Wood, Felipe Hinojosa and Maribel Ramirez perform on a beach in San Diego, Calif., during Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference's annual meeting.*

The audience involvement kept the material alive for the actors throughout their 32 performances.

"It's so interesting to see how we can produce this same scene over and over again, but in every place we go, they come up with so many different ideas," says team leader Erasmo Quintanilla of El Buen Pastor Mennonite Brethren Church in Orange Cove, Calif.

By getting people involved in the role play, forum theater "forces people to realize we can do as much damage by doing nothing as by being actively racist," says Jody Miller Shearer, MCC staff associate for racism awareness and one of the troupe's organizers.

One of the group's biggest challenges, according to Lisa White of North Wayne Mennonite Church in Dowagiac, Mich., was answering audience members who didn't recognize the racist overtones in a situation.

"It forced you to think, why is this a problem, and how do you explain it to someone who doesn't think it's a problem?" she says.

The troupe's sketches also addressed prejudice between and even within minority groups. Bam! on the table pounds the hand of an outraged Hispanic father when he hears that his daughter is dating an African-American. In another sketch, an African-American storekeeper treats a black customer like a shoplifter while letting other shoppers browse freely.

Troupe members and host churches agreed one of the tour's most significant benefits was the personal interaction it engendered.

"Meeting people and staying with host families was a highlight of the trip for me," says Maribel Ramirez of El Buen Pastor Mennonite Brethren Church.

"Hosting troupe members in our homes was a way of chipping away at stereotypes," says pastor Richard Regier of Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, Ore. "People could realize that other ethnic groups have a rich and vibrant history we know very little about."

Kathy Heinrichs Wiest

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

MINISTERS

Daniel Genest is developing a French-speaking congregation in Montreal. He is supported by the Mission and Service Commission of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada.

Anne and **Jake Harms**, Douglas Church, Winnipeg, are COM mission associates in Mexico. Jake is interim pastor for Blumenau Mennonite Church near Cuauhtemoc.

Michelle Krehbiel was installed as assistant pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., Sept. 15.

Hugo Neufeld is part-time pastor at Guelph (Ont.) Church.

David Tiessen was installed as pastor at Mannheim Church, Kitchener, Ont., June 23.

WORKERS

Tracy Brenneman, Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Germany.

Brian Brubaker, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands.

Nicole Marie Dyck, Vauxhall (Alta.) Church and Taber (Alta.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Amsterdam.

Gwen Groff, Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., is staffperson for the MCC U.S. Women's Concerns desk.

Jason Hildebrand, Springstein (Man.) Church and Stirling Avenue Church, Kitchener, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Hannover, Germany.

Robin Neustaeter, Gretna Bergthaler Church, Gretna, Man., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Arlesheim, Switzerland.

Katrina Schmidt, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Schwandorf, Germany.

Christopher Scott, Hillsboro, Kan., is director of customer services for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Eric and **Tracy W. Stutzman**, Salem (Ore.) Church and Salem Church, Tofield, Alta., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Atbara, Sudan, as community development workers.

Jennifer Thiessen, Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Limburgerhof, Germany.

Celeste Williams, Rainbow Church, Kansas City, Kan., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Elspeet, the Netherlands.

Rose Zacharias, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in the Netherlands.

Immediate opening: Director of development/advancement, full-time position, responsible for development, management and evaluation of the school's public relations program and fundraising program to enhance the achievement of school goals. Responsibilities include planning and implementing development activities and strategies, activating and managing several endowment/development committees, general oversight of all fundraising, assisting in activities of alumni committees and directing the student recruitment program.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Eric Martin, Western Mennonite School, 9045 Wallace Road NW, Salem, OR 97304; (503) 363-2000.**

Dean, professional studies division: Seeking qualified person for leadership and supervision of the professional studies division. The dean initiates and assists in curriculum development and review and in developing continuing education opportunities in various areas. Terminal degree in an academic discipline strongly desired, preferably in continuing education.

For full description and application form, write or phone **Dr. Howard J. Loewen, Academic Vice President, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; (209) 453-2023** Position begins Jan. 1, 1997, or June 1, 1997. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Fresno Pacific University is a dynamic Christian university of the Mennonite Brethren Church. All candidates for faculty positions must share the university's Christian commitment. Applications will be evaluated beginning Oct. 15 and appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured.

Charity Village, an organization that helps Canadian nonprofit organizations utilize the World Wide Web, named the Mennonite Central Committee site one of its Webmaster Award Sites, given to sites it considers particularly well done. The MCC Web site was created and is maintained by Ryan Rempel of Otttawa.

• • •

One hundred sixty-one books relating to social problems have been added to the Bethel College Library in North Newton, Kan., through a $3,300 Interlibrary Loan Development Grant from the Kansas Library Network Board. Topics represented include violence, hunger, gangs, AIDS, immigrants, racism and child abuse.

• • •

If the earth's population were shrunk to a village of 100 people with all existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like this: 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (north and south), 8 Africans; 70 nonwhite, 30 white; 70 non-Christians, 30 Christians; half the entire world's wealth in the hands of six people, all of them U.S. citizens; 70 unable to read; 50 malnourished; 80 living in substandard housing; only one with a college education. (*COMmunicator*)

• • •

A retreat for survivors of sexual abuse will be held Nov. 15-17 at Kenbrook Bible Camp in Pennsylvania. The retreat is for women who have worked through the initial trauma of abuse and are ready to explore the role of God in their recovery. The purpose of the retreat is to reclaim Christian traditions and symbols that were corrupted by abuse. The retreat is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Women's Concerns, Hope and Healing Ministries and Kenbrook. For information and an application, write to Spring of Hope, P.O. Box 69, Akron, PA 17501. (*Evangelical Visitor*)

Dean, undergraduate division: Seeking qualified person for leadership in the undergraduate division. The dean initiates and assists in faculty and curriculum development and review and provides administrative leadership for the undergraduate faculty through five divisional directors. Terminal degree in an academic discipline strongly desired.

For full description and application form, write or phone **Dr. Howard J. Loewen, Academic Vice President, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; (209) 453-2023.** Position begins June 1, 1997. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Fresno Pacific University is a dynamic Christian university of the Mennonite Brethren Church. All candidates for faculty positions must share the university's Christian commitment. Applications will be evaluated beginning Oct. 15 and appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured.

Administrative assistant/office manager beginning January 1997. The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund is a small, nonprofit corporation established to pass the Peace Tax Fund Bill in Congress. The Bill would allow conscientious objectors to military taxes to have their federal taxes spent for nonmilitary purposes only.

Send resume **by Nov. 15** to **Marian Franz, NCPTF, 2121 Decatur Place NW, Washington, DC 20008.**

Counseling and guidance: Seeking qualified faculty member to head the graduate-level school counseling and guidance program. Position begins Jan. 1, 1997, or August 1997. Doctorate (or nearly completed degree) in the field desired. Fresno Pacific University is a dynamic Christian university of the Mennonite Brethren Church. All candidates for faculty positions must share the university's Christian commitment.

For full description and application form, write or phone **Dr. Howard J. Loewen, Academic Vice President, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; (209) 453-2023.** Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Applications will be evaluated beginning Oct. 15 and appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured.

Scholarships for students planning to attend **Urbana '96** are available on a first-come, first-served basis from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Deadline for applications is Dec. 1.

Urbana '96 is an InterVarsity-sponsored student missions conference Dec. 27-31 at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. For more information, contact **Karen McCabe-Juhnke, COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; e-mail com@gcmc.org.**

PLANNED GIVING

UNLOCK

your assets

Do you sometimes feel that all of your assets are locked in place, with no key to be found? With careful planning you can "unlock" assets to provide for your needs, reduce your taxes and contribute to MCC's relief and development work, all at the same time.

Financial planning resources are available to help you. Ask MCC or your Mennonite Foundation representative for the keys to unlock your assets.

Mennonite Central Committee 717 859-3889
Mennonite Foundation 800 348-7468

Gordon Kaufman's Theology as Imaginative Construction

November 3-4, 1996

A symposium on the theology
of Gordon Kaufman, Edward Mallinckrodt Jr.
Professor of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School

Speakers include:

- Peter C. Hodgson, Vanderbilt University
- Gayle Gerber Koontz, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
- William Klassen, Ecole Biblique et Ecole Archéologique Française, Jerusalem
- Robbert A. Veen, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- James Juhnke, Bethel College
- Thomas Finger, Eastern Mennonite Seminary
- Lois Barrett, General Conference Mennonite Church
- J. Denny Weaver, Bluffton College
- Donald Stoesz, McGill University
- Scott Holland, Monroeville Church of the Brethren
- Paul Bube, Kansas Wesleyan University

KANSAS
Humanities Council

BETHEL
COLLEGE

300 East 27th Street • North Newton, Kansas 67117-0531
316-283-2500 • *http://www.bethelks.edu*

Akron Mennonite Church is seeking an **associate pastor**, beginning immediately. The associate pastor shares with the pastor in the total pastoral task, giving primary attention to the younger households and families of the church. There is flexibility in the assignment, though expectations include small-group work and preaching. M. Div. preferred and experience required.

Inquiries can be directed to **Search Committee Chair, Akron Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 208, Akron, Pa. 17501; fax (717) 859-3942.**

Are your dollars going places your values wouldn't take you?

MMA Praxis Mutual Funds give you the freedom to pursue your investment goals without compromising your values.

MMA Praxis avoids investments in enterprises that manufacture military weapons or are directly associated with the gambling industry and the production of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

For mutual fund investments that correspond with your ethical values, you need to find out more about MMA Praxis.

Contact an MMA counselor or call

1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.
For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

M M A

Inside
THE
Mennonite
Christ has no hands but ours (page 3)
But to minister? (page 5)
Called by God in whatever you do (page 6)

Christmas gift offer

Give 2 gifts for the price of 1

☐ **Yes!**

I want to share **The Mennonite** with my friends at Christmas this year. Please send gift subscriptions for one year to the following people at this special 2-for-1 rate.
New subscriptions only please.

Gift #1: **ONLY $28 U.S./$34 Cdn.**
Name ______________________
Address ______________________
City ______________________
State/Province/Code ______________________

Gift #2: **FREE**
Name ______________________
Address ______________________
City ______________________
State/Province/Code ______________________

Please check one:
☐ Payment enclosed.
☐ Bill me later.
☐ Send me the renewal notices.

Your name ______________________
Address ______________________
City ______________________
State/Province/Code ______________________

Clip and send by Nov. 30 to ensure that your subscriptions arrive by Christmas. Send to **The Mennonite**, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or call our toll-free order line: **1-800-757-5101**.
Offer expires Dec. 31, 1996.

Reviews

FILMS

BALM IN GILEAD

The Spitfire Grill, *written and directed by Lee David Zlotoff, produced by Forrest Murray*

Reviewed by Melanie A. Zuercher, assistant editor

I have heard two main complaints from popular media reviewers about *The Spitfire Grill*: that it tries to deal with too many issues; and that there's something somehow devious about the fact that a Catholic charitable organization underwrote the original production (later picked up by Castle Rock Entertainment for distribution in major theaters nationwide after it won an award at the Sundance Film Festival).

All I have to say about the latter is: It's OK for Coca-Cola or Nike to chip in major bucks for a movie in return for use of their products as "props," but not for Christians to produce a beautifully-shot film that has no sex, no violence (which is not to say no conflict), almost no swearing and no ostensibly humorous stereotyping of minority groups? I don't think so.

As for the first criticism, they're right—the movie tries to do too much, to bring in too many provocative themes and subplots and then inexplicably tie them up into (almost) happily ever after. The director should have been content with limiting himself to the relationships that are the film's major focus—the grace that wells up when people transcend fear and jealousy and have the courage to love and trust in the face of society's prejudice. If you go see the movie, look for that, and you won't waste your time.

Not that you would at any rate. Set in Maine and filmed in rural and village Vermont, *The Spitfire Grill* is a tree-filled visual treat. It's the story of Percy Talbot (Alison Elliot) who, after serving five years in a Maine prison and having nothing to connect her to the Appalachian Ohio from which she came, decides she wants to start her life over in Gilead, Maine. The kind sheriff talks crochety Hannah (Ellen Burstyn), who owns the town's only restaurant, the Spitfire Grill, into hiring Percy and giving her a place to live. After Hannah suffers a fall, Percy and Hannah's nephew's wife, Shelby (Marcia Gay Harden), take over running the restaurant, to the dismay of Shelby's husband, Nahum (Will Talbot), who doesn't trust Percy because of her past.

Castle Rock Entertainment

Something good: *As Ellen Burstyn looks on, Marcia Gay Harden (right) tries to teach Alison Elliot some fine points of food preparation.*

Local handyman Joe (Kieran Mulroney), who befriends Percy, tells her that the minute he saw her walk into town, he felt something good was going to happen. And good things do—from the retying of broken family bonds to individuals discovering their own strength and value. Percy's simple search for her own soul's healing begins to show the town where balm for its own wounds lies.

Though not overtly Christian, *The Spitfire Grill* tells a story of grace and mystery—of receiving both joy and sorrow undeserved. The strength that comes from living through pain and the hope arising from the promise of joy keep the community's foundation sturdy.

It may not be "great cinema," but it's a sweet story. Go see it.

FAITH WITH CULTURE

A Drink from the Stream Volume 2 *edited by John K. Sherriff and Heather Esau (Bethel College, 1996, 272 pages)*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, Lancaster, Pa.

Like its predecessor, this volume offers a glimpse into the world of Bethel College through writing on various topics by faculty and staff.The essays range from scholastic to collo-quial, offering something for every reader.

Most of the essays take a confessional tone. Many explore how faculty members' faith connects to the subject matter they teach. In many of these essays, the writers ponder the relationship between culture and faith. While

To help you with your 1997 Vacation Plans,

TOURMAGINATION
is pleased to announce...

Jamaica in Winter	Feb. 21 – 28
Celebrate Paraguay	Mar. 27 – April 7
Cities of the Apostle Paul	May 10 – 23
Highlights of China	May 21 – June 12
Spectacular Scandinavia and its Fjords	June 17 – July 1
Menno Simons European Sampler	July 7 – 24
Alaska, Yukon & Inside Passage Tour/Cruise	July 9 – 19
Berlin, Luther & the Mennonite Story in Poland	Sept. 12 – 26
Australia – New Zealand	Feb. 13 – Mar. 7/98

Call 1-800-565-0451 for more information

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

Reg. #1567624

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

the collection purposefully avoids a theme, it becomes clear that questions of culture and faith are central to Bethel's self-conception.

To give you a flavor of some of the essays: Brad S. Born explores questions of racism in higher education, Fern E. Gerber shares pragmatic reflections on the experiences of nursing students, Kamala Platt writes about cultural similarities between Mennonites and Chicanos, A. Wayne Wiens considers what light modern genetics sheds on human behavior.

The book reaches beyond the teaching faculty to include essays by staff from the administration building and the physical plant. Perhaps in future volumes, editors will consider including some student essays to round out the picture of Bethel College.

The two volumes of *A Drink from the Stream* provide a valuable service to Bethel and its constituents. Because the books avoid a topical focus, one has the sense these essays represent an honest reflection of the values and beliefs that drive the school. And it is good to see issues of personal faith development resurface again and again in that reflection.

Resources

• • ▼

- **With Our Own Eyes: The dramatic story of a Christian response to the wounds of war, racism and oppression** by Don Mosley with Joyce Hollyday (Herald Press, 1996, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) is about Jubilee Partners, based in Comer, Ga.
- **Silver Thread: The ups and downs of a Mennonite family in mission (1895-1995)** by Joseph C. Shenk (Good Books, 1996, $9.95 U.S.) details three generations of mission work, first in East Africa, later in Central America.
- **A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership** provides basic guidelines for ministerial credentials, information on the theology of ministry, ministerial ethics and a history of ministry in the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. It represents eight years of MC/GC Polity Committee work. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 or flp@gcmc.org ($8.95 U.S./$12.75 Cdn.).
- **Decide for Peace: A Guide for Personal Bible Study and Reflection on Conscientious Objection** for youth and adults is available from the Commission on Home Ministries. The packet includes the *Decide for Peace* study guide written by Eddy Hall. Order from CHM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100 or chm@gcmc.org ($10 U.S./$14 Cdn.).
- **Does God Fight? Violence in the Bible** by David Radcliff is a new release in the Generation Why Bible study series for high school youth. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 ($14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn.).
- **How Do You Know? Wisdom in the Bible** by Christopher Bowman is a new release in the Generation Why Bible study series for high school youth. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484 ($12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.).
- **Ending Racism: Working for a Racism-Free 21st Century** is a 35-minute video with discussion guide that explores racism in the United States. Available for $35 U.S. postpaid from Crossroads Milwaukee, 2218 N. 36th St., Milwaukee, WI 53208; (414) 871-4045.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
invites applications for the position of:

Executive Director

Starting date: March 1997
Location: Akron, Pennsylvania
Applications will be accepted
through October 18, 1996.

Direct inquiries and applications to:
Rich Garber, Chair, Search Committee
17270 Northside Blvd., Nampa, ID 83687
Phone: 208-467-3519
Fax: 208-467-2022

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Wynn Goering • Brad Born • Fern Gerber • Raylene Hinz-Penner • Duane
Friesen • Kathleen Regier • Keith Sprunger • Dwight Krehbiel • John Sheriff
• Merrill Krabill • Don Lemons • Kamala Platt • Les Goerzen • Gail Lutsch •
Ami Reg la Krell •
Wayne V ad Born •
Fern Ge Regier •
Keith Sp bill • Don
Lemons gier • Dan
Quinlin • • Dwight
Platt • Ji • Raylene
Hinz-Pen • Dwight
Krehbiel Platt • Les
Goerzen del • Bob
Regier • e • Wynn
Goering • Friesen •
Kathleen f • Merrill
Krabill • sch • Ami
Regier • l • Wayne
Wiens • rn • Fern
Gerber • er • Keith
Sprunger Lemons •
Kamala Quinlin •
Arnold V ght Platt •
Jim Juhn ene Hinz-
Penner • • Dwight
Krehbiel Platt • Les
Goerzen del • Bob
Regier • e • Wynn
Goering • Brad Born • Fern Gerber • Raylene Hinz-Penner • Duane Friesen •
Kathleen Regier • Keith Sprunger • Dwight Krehbiel • John Sheriff • Merrill
Krabill • Don Lemons • Kamala Platt • Les Goerzen • Gail Lutsch • Ami

A Drink from the
Stream, Vol. 2:
Essays by Bethel College
Faculty and Staff

Available by mail for $18
(includes shipping & handling).
Call the Bethel Bookstore
at 316-284-5205.
Also available for $14.95 at
the Bethel Bookstore, the
Kauffman Museum Store and
Faith & Life Bookstore.

BETHEL
COLLEGE

300 East 27th St. • North Newton, KS 67117
316-283-2500 • *http://www.bethelks.edu*

************CAR-RT-SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 512
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

The danger of soullessness

Someone asked me recently, What's become of us? We had just read about the United Nations voting to ban the development of chemical weapons. However, though the U.S. president wants to sign the ban, the U.S. Senate is opposed. Presidential nominee and former Senate majority leader Bob Dole, who agreed with the ban five months ago, now opposes it. It is hard to verify, he says, and it would disrupt U.S. chemical companies to have international inspectors on hand.

The bottom line seems to be that keeping these businesses running smoothly is more important than trying to safeguard our planet from the poison of chemical weapons. Yet no one else seems upset by this.

Is it that we are not upset or that we feel powerless to do anything about it? Are we too inundated by stories about the evil around us to be able to feel anything about any of them? Has this overload made us cynical or apathetic?

We need to question things and not simply accept everything we're told. But when cynicism becomes apathy, when we become so hardened that we appear soulless, we are in great danger.

Many factors have contributed to this tendency toward soullessness. One is the prevalence of the media in our lives. We know more about what is happening around the world, and it can be overwhelming. A second is that we have become more private. We don't talk as much with friends, neighbors, family about what we experience, what we see and hear, what we feel.

What can we do about this emptiness within us and within our churches? We can be more selective about our exposure to events and to whom we turn to learn about those events. It is tempting to try to isolate ourselves from such information, retreat into a cocoon and turn our backs to the suffering in our world. But God calls us to be salt and light in the world, not to dig a hole and hide our heads like the proverbial ostrich.

Become more cynical—more questioning—about the sources of the news you read or hear on radio and TV. For example, TV is one of the least reliable sources for news information, since it is a medium geared toward entertainment and does not allow the time needed to explore the various aspects of an event. (CNN, which I don't watch because I don't have cable TV, may be an exception.)

Newspapers, while more reliable because they can devote more space to a story, still suffer limitations. Be aware of their biases, since each piece of the media—even this magazine—operates from some set of biases.

And think about all the news you're not receiving. I often learn more international news from Mennonite Central Committee news releases than from my newspaper, since most U.S. newspapers are dismally lacking in news from overseas.

We can also concentrate more of our attention on our local setting. Writer/philosopher Wendell Berry goes so far as to say "always supply local needs first." This may seem selfish until you place emphasis on "needs."

Slave labor: I may be aware of companies like Nike using slave labor overseas and leaving one country to set up shop in another where labor costs are even lower. I may boycott Nike products and write the company a letter—which I've done—but there's little else to do. On the other hand, I may become aware of unfair labor practices in my own town or even in the company where I work. That I can do something about.

Another way to fight soullessness is to develop community. Find others with whom you can share your thoughts and feelings. I am part of a small group in our congregation. We meet weekly to talk about our experiences and pray together. More and more I'm learning how much I am sustained by those around me who pray for me.

Praying through the Psalms will help us learn to feel the pain around us and within us and offer that pain to God. Too many of us shy away from the Psalms, which formed Israel's—and Jesus'—prayer life. Yet if we cannot bring our own feelings of sorrow, anger or even hatred to God, then our petitions and praises will seem muted.

We cannot—and should not—ignore the suffering in the world around us, yet if we don't feel that suffering within us and bring it in prayer to God, our souls will become hardened, our love will wither and our voices for God's justice will grow silent. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

Inside

Does God play ball? / p. 12

Big is beautiful / p. 13

Review: *Fly Away Home* / p. 21

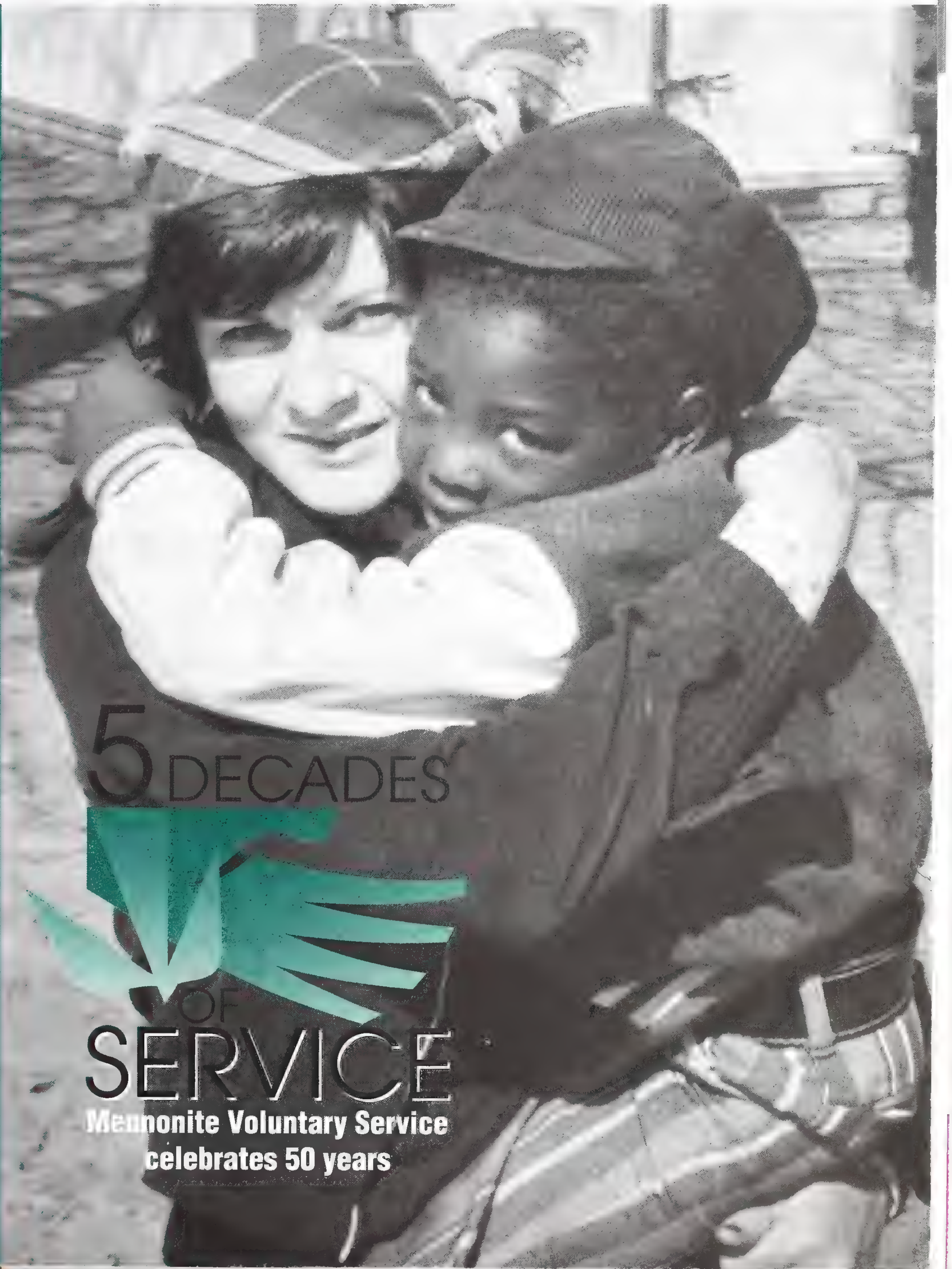
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 20
OCTOBER 22, 1996

OCT 30 '96

- Hands and feet of the gospel (page 3)
- Stories from the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s (pages 4-10)



5 DECADES OF SERVICE

Mennonite Voluntary Service celebrates 50 years

Prologue

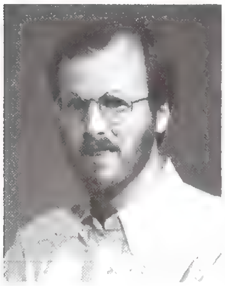
Service is not only at the heart of our identity as Mennonites, it is at the heart of the gospel. Jesus said, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

In this issue we celebrate 50 years of Mennonite Voluntary Service, an agency of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Carla Reimer, news editor for the GCMC, has written five accounts of MVS workers, one from each of the five decades. These stories show the pioneering spirit of MVS, the way it has introduced primarily young people to new settings, new people and brought changes to the volunteers and to the church at large.

We learn that not only did these volunteers serve others, but they experienced change themselves as they learned how others—often the poor and disenfranchised—live and as they lived with other volunteers in their unit houses. These relationships often made lasting, formative impressions.

When you contribute to the work of the General Conference Mennonite Church, you help make ministry like MVS possible.



Parents will especially want to read Denise Preller's tips about how to help children be Christian when they participate in sports (page 12). We adults need to pay attention to such advice as well. *gh*

Next issue: Working for peace in Palestine

Cover: Photo supplied by MVS

Contents

FEATURES

3 Hands and feet of the gospel

A special focus on five decades of Mennonite Voluntary Service

4 1950s

A summer service program in Chicago opened up a whole new world for two women during the 1950s.

6 1960s

Commitment to church and an adventurous spirit led Donna and Irvin Driedger to Mississippi.

7 1970s

Voluntary service led to a new home in Seattle for one Midwesterner.

8 1980s

MVS confirmed this couple's interest in community.

9 1990s

MVS helped define career for this volunteer.

DEPARTMENTS

11 Letters

12 Children

13 News

19 Record

21 Reviews

24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. ©1996**

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher

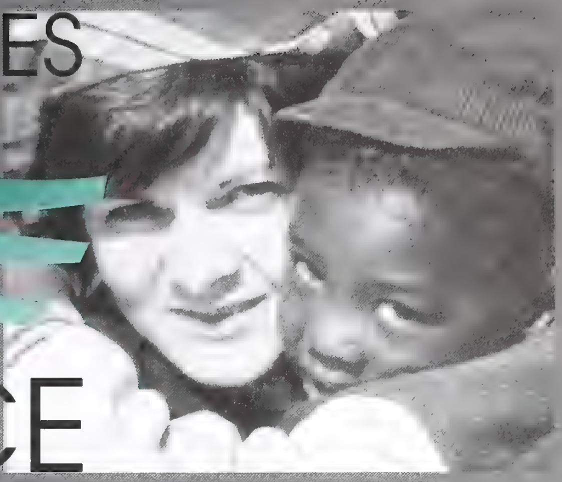
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

5 DECADES OF SERVICE



HANDS AND FEET OF THE GOSPEL

Miles Reimer

With much of the impetus coming from the Civilian Public Service (CPS) experience of World War II, voluntary service grew to be an anchor of Anabaptist expression of radical discipleship. Voluntary service has been the hands and feet of the gospel for many congregations and communities. It has brought together ordinary people—women and men—with a variety of skills. It was, and still is, grounded in communal living, service to others, reduced standard of living and economic sharing, and finds its life indelibly tied to local congregations.

In its early years, voluntary service provided the avenue for a healthy transition of many Mennonite young people to urban settings. The voluntary service unit provided a community from which people could learn to understand how their rural Mennonite roots in service to others could make a positive difference in the face of much need. While voluntary service was designed to meet the needs of others, it had a profound effect on Mennonite young people. As Elmer Ediger said (see quote on page 5), it aroused spiritual hunger and opened eyes to the power of the gospel. It was a rich training ground for budding church leaders.

The first three directors of General Conference Mennonite Church service programs, and most of the volunteers, were women. While the men were involved in CPS, women were also motivated to show what the Mennonite church could do (meeting human need), and not only what it would not do (go to war).

The rich lessons of faith and life for thousands of volunteers continue to flavor and strengthen the Anabaptist community 50 years later. Mennonite Voluntary Service continues to build on this foundation, with units in more than 20 communities across Canada and the United States. Included in this issue of *The Mennonite* are stories from individuals representing each decade of MVS. Their stories show the power and presence of God's Spirit tying the past to the present and offering a solid foundation for the future.

Miles Reimer is director of Mennonite Voluntary Service.

1950s

A summer service program in Chicago opened up a whole new world for two women during the 1950s.

Carla Reimer

In summer 1954, 19-year-old Shirley Schrag embarked on her first-ever train trip from Sioux Falls, S.D., to Chicago, a 10-hour journey. Shirley and her friend Vinette Graber felt relieved when a Mennonite missionary, who happened to be traveling to the same destination, adopted them. "She took us under her wing," says Shirley, recalling how the woman even shared the sandwiches she had packed in a shoebox.

The train trip marked the beginning of an eventful summer for Shirley and her friend, who both came from the small farming community of Marion, S.D.

The two college-age women had signed up for two months of voluntary service in Chicago with the Home Mission Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

They were among eight young people who taught vacation Bible school and led day camps for preschool through junior high-age children that summer. The volunteers lived on the campus of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, located in the predominantly black neighborhood known as Woodlawn.

"I had always wanted to do some kind of service. It seemed like a good fit for me to go to Woodlawn," says Shirley. "I had experience working with children in the Salem-Zion Mennonite Church [Freeman, S.D.]. The urban setting also appealed to me because I had grown up on a farm."

"I went in not knowing what to expect. I was very naive," she adds. "I had led a sheltered life. We didn't have a television in our home, so my world had been pretty small. I had so much to learn."

Not long after Shirley and her friend arrived in Chicago, they received their first lesson in the difference between the rural and urban environments. The two had been in their apartment for less than an hour when they heard a noise that sounded like a gunshot.

They were about to go outside to investigate when another volunteer told them to stay in their room. Apparently, a thief had been shot as he tried to steal some items from a car. "We knew we were not in rural South Dakota anymore," says Shirley.

'Big city' experience: Harriet Amstutz, a second-grade teacher in Hillsboro, Kan., was the unit leader. Like Shirley, Harriet was drawn to Chicago because she wanted a "big city" experience, while at the same time doing "something useful for the church. I wasn't inclined to be leisurely during the summer; I wanted to be constructive."

In Kansas she had attended a few meetings of Women in Church Vocations, where she had learned about GC service options. A graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College and a Bluffton, Ohio, native, Harriet had already volunteered with Mennonite Central Committee in psychiatric

Naive: *Shirley Schrag teaches vacation Bible school at Woodlawn in Chicago.*

Supplied by Shirley Waltner

Supplied by Shirley Waltner

Searching for a focus: *Harriet Amstutz (standing at right) with children on their way to the Sauk Forest Preserve Day Camp*

hospitals in London, Ont., and Brandon, Man., during previous summers.

Her interest in service was spurred by stories she had heard at home and at First Mennonite Church in Bluffton. She recalled listening to her brother, Robert, who had been a part of Civilian Public Service, tell of the awful conditions at the Cleveland State Hospital.

She also wanted to try something new because she was at a time in her life when she was searching for a focus. "I had feelings of vagueness," says Harriet. "Most of my friends got married after college. I remember wondering, Will any doors open for me?"

Some of the Chicago volunteers served with Grace Mennonite Church. But the majority, including Harriet and Shirley, led activites for Woodlawn Mennonite Church, an interracial congregation.

Neither woman had any close relationships with blacks prior to their arrival in Chicago. "It was a time of exploration," says Harriet.

Cramped quarters: After teaching Bible school during the morning hours, the volunteers often visited with Woodlawn residents in the afternoon. "When I visited them in their homes, I discovered they lived in cramped quarters," she says, adding that often members of their extended family stayed in the apartments, too.

"I wondered what the future held for the children. I wondered if they would ever find their place within church, what it meant for them to interact with another race," says Harriet.

She recognized, for the first time, that many expressions she had considered normal were racist. "Often we would play games with the children on the bus," she recalls. "Once, I started saying eenie, meanie, minie, mo, catch a. ... I stopped in time because all of a sudden, I realized what the problem was. The children supplied the word tiger.

"It was a worthwhile experience to help me overcome some of my own racism. Unless there is interaction between the races, there will always be barriers."

Shirley also feels her time in Chicago would not have been as "rich" without her relationships with blacks. She enjoyed attending Woodlawn Mennonite Church because the worship services were more enthusiastic and emotional than in her home church, where people were reserved.

After her summer in Chicago, Shirley returned to Freeman (S.D.) Junior College, where she completed a business program. In 1956 she married Calvin Waltner. For the next 28 years they raised cattle and hogs on a farm near Freeman. Since 1987, she has been a Mennonite Mutual Aid counselor.

Harriet, who also served at Woodlawn during the summers of 1955 and 1956, married Nicholas Dick. As a result of her time in Chicago, she says, she has felt more comfortable in the ethnically diverse city of Toronto, where she has spent most of her married life.

"It opened up the world to me," says Harriet. "It gave me greater exposure to people from all over. I think it was good for me to share experiences with people from other cultures and people who were in need. I still feel that way today."

"It broadened my understanding of the church. I learned to appreciate the work of the General Conference. I also realized that people worship in different ways," says Shirley. "I gained so much more than I gave."

Carla Reimer is news editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

SLEEPING IN A HAYLOFT

"Christian voluntary service is doing something about the ideals we profess. Rolling up our sleeves and losing ourselves in work is part of voluntary service. It is a dare to launch out to try one's mettle, to bring the gospel message to others by what we do, and in words that help. It is the elimination of nonessentials in living for the sake of more effective service. Sometimes this means sleeping in a hayloft, converted chicken barn or a barrack. It is stepping out of isolation into the world of conflicting ways and ideas. To many the experience of voluntary service reveals for the first time the problem of evil. Many find their spiritual hunger aroused, their eyes opened to see the power of the gospel, their appreciation for good Christian homes sharpened. The challenge of voluntary service, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' leads those who serve into the school of Christ. Such is voluntary service in war and peacetime."

—*"Voluntary Service—A New Approach to Mission," by Elmer Ediger,* Mennonite Life, *January 1951*

5 DECADES OF SERVICE

1960s

Commitment to church and an adventurous spirit led Donna and Irvin Driedger to Mississippi.

Carla Reimer

Donna and Irvin Driedger had been married for only two years when they decided to volunteer. While none of their peers were exploring service opportunities at the time, the Driedgers were eager to try something completely different before they got too settled.

In spring 1960, the couple had returned to Osler, Sask., where they owned a farm, after studying at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

"We lived in a rural community, which meant there was limited interaction with other churches. We wanted to have other experiences," says Irvin.

"We had a desire to spread our wings," says Donna.

Their interest also grew out of "a real commitment to human needs," she says. "We wanted to be a part of the mission of the church."

From fall 1961 through August 1963, they were a part of a Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Gulfport, Miss. "Our assignments at a community center included leading children's clubs and teaching Sunday school. But the main point was to work against the oppression of the black people," says Donna, noting that Gulfport, which had a population of about 25,000, was still a segregated town.

On one occasion, Irvin took a boys club to a fair at the local grocery store. "There were two lines, one for blacks and one for whites," he recalls. "I stood with the boys in the 'colored' line. The ticket vendor said to me, 'Can't you read?' I replied, 'I chose to come through this line.'"

Irvin soon realized that the rides for the blacks were four minutes shorter than the rides for whites, even though they paid the same price. Later, he took the issue up with the city council. "Nothing changed," Irvin says. "But at least they saw that there were white people who cared."

Whites only: Donna had a similar experience with her African-American friend Dorothy Knight. One afternoon the two of them went downtown to shop. "Dorothy took a drink from the drinking fountain that was designated for whites only. Immediately the owner of the store came over and said, 'Can't you read?' Dorothy replied, 'Yes, I can read very well. I don't like colored water.' She had self-respect," Donna says.

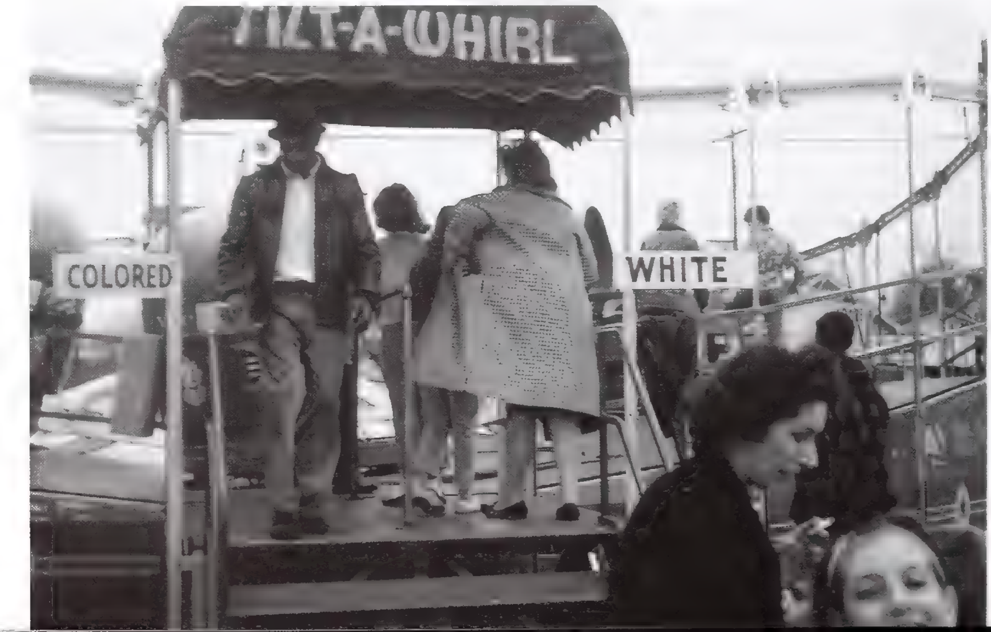
The Mennonite churches in the area were not open to blacks either. "They tolerated them. One member told me how he had carried flour with a black man for 20 years but had never sat down and talked to him," says Irvin.

"It was an impressionable time for us," says Donna. She notes that they both wondered if segregation would ever end and whether there could be justice in the world.

Initially, when the couple returned to Osler, they had a hard time adjusting. "Our peers were two years ahead of us in terms of being settled. There seemed to be more focus on what you had than who you were," says Donna. Before long, however, they both became involved with church and community activities.

Their interaction with blacks in Mississippi led them to have more sensitivity to people of all races and a

Two lines: *The rides for the blacks were four minutes shorter, says Irvin Driedger.*



Supplied by Donna and Irvin Driedger

"People who don't volunteer miss a great deal."

Donna Driedger

Supplied by Donna and Irvin Driedger

Sensitivity: *Donna and Irvin in 1994*

greater willingness to speak out against racism, they say.

Once, at a school board meeting, when some members referred to Indian people in derogatory terms, Irvin told them, We don't have to use that kind of language. "I'm not saying I have always done the right thing. But I feel like people respected me for that," he says, adding that "during my 17 years as chairman of the board, I saw remarkable changes in attitude in this regard."

Donna is a public school teacher; Irvin is a farmer. The couple hopes to serve again when they retire. "We were much enriched by our experience in Gulfport," says Donna. "People who don't volunteer miss a great deal."

Carla Reimer is news editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

1970s

Voluntary service led to a new home in Seattle for one Midwesterner.

Carla Reimer

When Emily Goertz joined Seattle's Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit in 1976, she never dreamed that one day she would consider this West Coast city her home.

Emily grew up on a farm near Goessel, Kan. After graduating from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., with a psychology degree in 1974, she spent the next two years working at a local mental health institution.

While Emily's interest in service was rooted in her faith, she also saw MVS as an opportunity "to try something new. This seemed like a safe way of doing it. It seemed easier than for me to go completely alone to a place where I had no community support."

Even though she wanted to experience a new setting, Emily assumed she would return to the Midwest once she completed her two-year assignment at a community mental health center in Seattle.

It wasn't so much her service assignment that lured her to stay, although she enjoyed the responsibilities she

Supplied by Emily Goertz

Sense of community: *The Seattle MVS unit in 1976 (top row, from left): David Ortman, Ken Ensroth, Mark Matthies, Gene Kaufman, (bottom row) Ethel Plett, Emily Goertz, Clint Stucky, Rhonda Kaufman* had at Seattle Mental Health Institute. "It was a day treatment program," she says. "We worked to stabilize people, some of whom had a long history of being institutionalized. Sometimes it was frustrating because I didn't see dramatic changes. But at times I could see I had made a difference."

It was more the sense of community she found in Seattle. "There was a lot of interaction among the volunteers, particularly during the first year," she says. "After a number of moves, the unit purchased a house. There was a strong sense that we were finally settled. After supper, we often sat around the table and talked."

Butter or margarine: "We had legendary debates over whether we should use butter or margarine," recalls Emily with a laugh. "It was a question of whether you live naturally or frugally."

While she may jokingly remember the butter vs. margarine debate, the conversations she had with fellow MVS workers in the late 1970s have had an influence on her life today. "It reinforced how important it is to look at how you spend your money," she says.

In fact, she still lives in a community-owned building precisely because she "wants to free up [her] time by sharing resources." The group of eight individuals, all members of Seattle Mennonite Church, share a common courtyard, workshop and laundry facilities. They also share other household items. For example, Emily's next-door neighbor borrows her vacuum cleaner.

Seattle Mennonite Church has had a close relationship with the voluntary service unit for a long time, Emily says. During her time in MVS, the congregation often met for social events at the unit house.

While she was still in MVS, Emily says, she was pushed to become involved in various leadership roles from teaching Sunday school to leading worship.

At the end of her two-year volunteer assignment, when she looked back at all her experiences in Seattle, Emily realized she "felt established" in a city 1,800 miles away from her home.

"It turned my life in a different direction," says Emily, who has worked for 15 years at an emergency shelter for homeless people in Seattle.

Carla Reimer is news editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

1980s

MVS *confirmed this couple's interest in community.*

Carla Reimer

After four years as pastors for a Lutheran parish in eastern Montana, Nelson and Bonita Bock wanted to explore peace, lifestyle and community issues in a deeper way than what they were experiencing in the small, isolated town where they lived.

The Bocks, who had a 1-year-old son at the time, began looking for service opportunities through Inter-Christo (a Christian job-placement agency). They soon discovered that about half the assignments they wanted were with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS).

While they knew about the Anabaptist tradition from their studies at a Lutheran seminary, the couple did some research before making a final decision to enter MVS in Colorado.

"The fact that it was connected to a peace church was significant to us," says Bonita. "We also learned that Mennonites place a strong emphasis on community."

The Bocks joined the Arvada, Colo., unit in fall 1984 for a two-year assignment with an ecumenical peace center in downtown Denver. Nelson worked with Witness for Peace, an organiza-

Alternative lifestyle: *The Arvada, Colo., MVS unit 1984-86 (top row, from left): Ken Stroad, Nelson and Bonita Bock, John Klaassen with Hannah Klaassen, (bottom row) Susan Miller, Darla Harms, Ivan Becker with Nathan Bock, Valerie Klaassen with Sarah Klaassen*

Supplied by Bonita and Nelson Bock

tion working against U.S. intervention in Central America. Bonita taught conflict management and parenting skills in area schools and churches.

"What really impressed us about the Mennonite church," says Nelson, "was the emphasis on the walk of discipleship and the leading of the Spirit, more than the arcane questions of doctrine.

"It was powerful for us to see how seriously people took their faith in terms of addressing social issues of our day ... what they were called to be and to do as Christians. We saw MVS as part of that."

Once, during a worship service at Arvada Mennonite Church, when someone asked how many people had been a part of voluntary service, at least half the members raised their hands, recalls Nelson.

"That was really powerful for us. We saw how the church was strengthened by people who had taken advantage of service opportunities," he says.

The couple appreciated their time with MVS so much that they started a volunteer program for Lutherans in 1987, less than a year after they had completed their assignments in Colorado.

"The whole voluntary service experience was too good a thing for us to leave after two years," says Bonita, noting that their Denver-based program, called Urban Servant Corps, has many similarities to MVS.

Faith commitments: "Without community, you can't do anything over the long haul," says Nelson. "It's not that building community is ever easy, not even in MVS, but we became aware of how important community is to maintaining our faith commitments, especially since those commitments call us to an alternative lifestyle."

"I can't help but think that people who have been in voluntary service have a different perspective because they have encountered poor people as individuals rather than simply as statistics," says Bonita.

"I see voluntary service as a ministry that meets real human needs while at the same time opening the hearts and eyes of those who are in service to see God in unexpected ways," she says.

Currently the Urban Servant Corps has 10 volunteers who work in community service agencies in the central part of Denver. Until this last year, the Bocks and their two children shared housing with the Urban Servant Corps volunteers. The Bocks also are co-directors of a Denver urban semester program for Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa.

"There is no question for us," says the couple, "that our connecting with MVS was the work of the Spirit, and that experience has profoundly shaped our own lives and ministries."

Carla Reimer is news editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

---

5 DECADES OF SERVICE

1990s

MVS *helped define career for this volunteer.*

Carla Reimer

After completing a bachelor's degree in music from the University of Waterloo (Ont.), Mark Harder found himself facing "a big question mark" in terms of his future.

"It was the most unsure time in my life. Until then I had cruised; things had always fallen into place before," he says.

Since Mark, who grew up in Edmonton, had always figured he would do a stint of volunteer work at some point, he thought he might as well apply to some service agencies.

Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) was the first to respond to his application. When the staff suggested an assignment with Welcome Inn Community Centre, Hamilton, Ont., it seemed to be the right fit, Mark says.

"I wanted to move out of the white, middle-class, Mennonite setting to one that was more nontraditional. I liked the fact that I would be working with low-income people," he says. "It felt like a place that would challenge me."

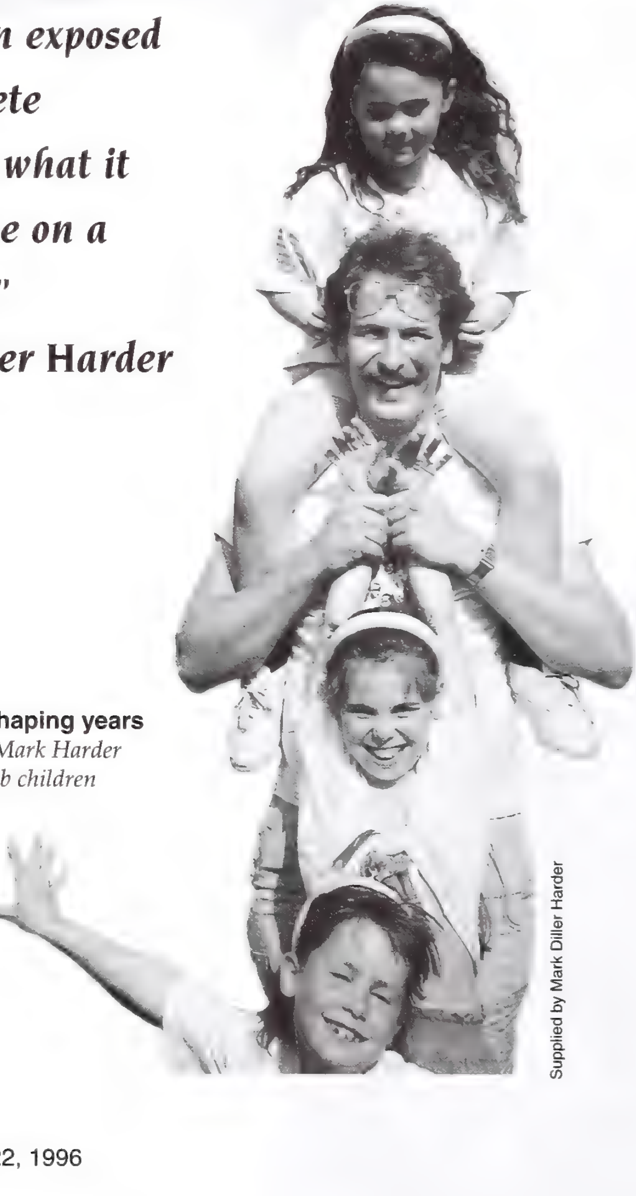
From June 1989 through June 1991, Harder provided leadership to activities ranging from youth groups to summer day camps for children to a senior lunch program. During his second year with MVS, he also worked as a part-time pastoral assistant at the Welcome Inn Church in Hamilton.

Welcome Inn, he says, is the kind of place where you automatically are considered part of a community. One individual, who lives a block away from the unit house, "claims any new

5 DECADES OF SERVICE

"Before, poverty was more of an academic issue for me. But my experiences at Welcome Inn exposed me to concrete examples of what it means to live on a low income."

Mark Diller Harder



'Two most shaping years of my life': *Mark Harder with Kid's Club children*

Supplied by Mark Diller Harder

MVSer as his own," Mark says, noting how this person invited him out for coffee and doughnuts during his first week there.

Day-to-day struggles: The friendships Mark developed with local residents and staff had an impact on his views about the poor. "Before, poverty was more of an academic issue for me. But my experiences at Welcome Inn exposed me to concrete examples of what it means to live on a low income. When I was a guest in people's homes, I would hear about their day-to-day experiences and struggles," Mark says.

By listening to their stories and seeing how they lived, "I learned not to lump everyone together. I came to see them as individuals, each of whom contributed to the community," he says.

After two years of service, he also found "it was much clearer that pastoral ministry was where I was headed." As a result, he enrolled in the master of divinity program at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. In 1992, he married Rachel Diller, who had served at Welcome Inn while Mark was there.

Today he works as the student and young adult minister for the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and at the House of Friendship, a homeless men's shelter in Kitchener, Ont.

"I consider my time with MVS as the two most shaping years of my life. The experience sharpened my identity, what I believe," Mark says. "I also had my best sense of community there. When I go back to visit, it still feels like home."

Carla Reimer is news editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Letters

CHILDREN'S SABBATH

Thanks for the Sept. 10 issue focusing on children in our churches and our world.

One of the ways our church has worked at those concerns is by celebrating the Children's Sabbath. The Children's Defense Fund sponsors this as a national, interfaith event, set this year for Oct. 19-20.

In our service we recognize and give thanks for the children of our church; we also recognize and pray for the children of the world—many of them experiencing the pain of poverty, violence and injustice.

Resource materials are available by calling Children's Defense Fund at (202) 628-8787. *Rod Stafford, Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan.*

LIFE OF OBEDIENCE

I read with real appreciation and thanksgiving the lead article in the Sept. 24 issue, "A Jubilee Journey." Rosella Wiens Regier's life story is one of obedience to the full measure of the Great Commission. As she has gone forth into mission—in rural Kansas schoolhouses, in Gulfport, Miss., churches and as a Christian educator at 722 Main Street [General Conference Mennonite Church central offices]—she has always taught us to observe the loving commands of a grace-filled Christ. We are, as a denomination and an Anabaptist family, blessed by God with the gifts Rosella has so willingly offered the church. Thanks for sharing her story with the whole church. *Jeff Wright, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.*

THE
Mennonite
is available on
cassette.
To order, call
1-800-757-5101.

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

HUNGRY GHOSTS

Taiwan—The air was filled with smoke as bonfires of spirit (ghost) money burned on the streets to assure the hungry ghosts enough spending money in their abode. Yesterday [Aug. 28] marked the middle of the seventh lunar month when the hungry ghosts are released from hell for one month to roam the earth. Tables laden with food are offered to them along with the money to keep them from harming people. You have to see and experience these demonstrations in order to understand the heavy feeling of darkness that comes over one's soul, and the desire for the lifting of blindness from hearts of people in Taiwan. In this setting is the Yung-An Church and our parish. Your prayers for us, the church and this community are much coveted.

Praise God for a good Bible school program this week. Although only 24 of the 43 registered children attended, there was an excellent spirit of cooperation by the staff, and a well-planned program. Pray that many of the children will now attend Sunday school as the teachers continue contact with the students.

Marietta is now teaching the Intro to Bible course to ninth-grade students at Bethany School in Taipei (a branch of Morrison Academy). The class meets twice a week. *Sheldon and Marietta Sawatzky*

DEATH RATE HIGH

Botswana—It hardly seems possible that I have already been back in Botswana for more than two months.

A summer with abundant rain has brought a severe outbreak of malaria. This year the death rate has been particularly high, especially among young adults. AIDS deaths are also increasing rapidly, and it is probable that at least some malaria deaths are AIDS-related. Pastors and other church leaders are on the verge of exhaustion because of the large number of funerals.

Another concern is an outbreak of cattle lung disease. Just this past month the order was issued for the extermination of all the cattle in the Ngamiland district. Many people are losing the equivalent of their life's savings since for many, cattle are their bank account. Future crop production will also be affected because of a shortage of draft power. *Eugene Thieszen*

UNEQUAL BURDEN

Tokyo—We were inspired, informed and dismayed on a recent "Peace Tour" to Okinawa, where we stayed at the Ginowan Center, touring vast areas appropriated by the U.S. military under the Armed Forces Agreement with Japan. The 50,000 U.S. military, civilians and dependents live on 20 percent of the island; the 1,250,000 Okinawans live on the rest. It is easy to see why they feel they have an unequal burden placed on their lands.

The Okinawans' protest is not only with the U.S. military but with the central Japanese government as well. They feel they have long been victimized by the historical takeover of their land, first by the Japanese of Kyushu, but now by the continuing policies.

Their protest encompasses the unfairness of their burden, the crimes against their people (e.g. the recent rape of an elementary school girl), their inability to develop their economy because of the land appropriation and the destruction of their mountains, causing an ecological imbalance resulting in the rapid deterioration of the coral reefs and threatening the fishing industry.

The Okinawans are constantly required to pay the price for wars others initiate and prepare for. *Bob and Phyllis Carlson*

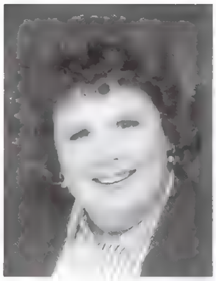
Children are people, too

••••▼

Does God play ball?

How to help our children be Christian in the midst of the secular world

Denise Preller



Denise Preller is director of God's Little Acre Preschool at North Danvers Mennonite Church, Danvers, Ill., where she is a member.

Your child is at bat. The child playing catcher repeatedly calls your child "fatso." The umpire does nothing, the other coach is encouraging it, and your coach is powerless. Your child turns to the catcher and says, "Hey stupid, shut up!" You cringe. You know the Christian thing to do is to "turn the other cheek." But was it really so wrong for your child to try and protect himself?

We parents often struggle with how to help our children be Christian in the midst of the secular world. We wonder how to help them "fight the influences of the world" but also "be salt and light to the world."

We are constantly caught in a tug-of-war between the values of our society and the values of our faith. "Secular values" and "faith values," without exception, cannot co-exist. The mutually exclusive nature of these values is sharply defined in the world of sports.

Examples of clashing secular and faith values:

Secular value: Winning is everything. The end justifies the means.

Clashing faith value: Winning only has value if the game is played with integrity.

Secular value: Mistakes are a time for shame.

Clashing faith value: Mistakes are a time for learning.

Secular value: Pride is found in "beating" the other team.

Clashing faith value: Pride is found in doing your best, whatever the outcome may be.

Secular value: Your teammates are more important than all others in the game.

Clashing faith value: All the players in the game have worth and value, including the players on the other team.

Secular value: The coach's job is to get the players to perform and win. Whatever methods are necessary to accomplish winning are tolerated.

Clashing faith value: The coach's job is to teach skills in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere. The coach should demonstrate respect for the child at all times.

World Health Organization photo by E. Mandelmann

A good Christian is a good sport.

Secular value: Doing your best is important so you can do well, please your parents and impress your friends and the coach.

Clashing faith value: Doing your best is important as a reflection of your respect for the gifts that God has given you.

Secular value: If someone is unfair to you during a game, retaliate.

Clashing faith value: Turn the other cheek.

The terms "good sport" and "good Christian" are interchangeable. As Christian parents we need to be clear about what we think being a good sport looks like, sounds like, feels like. We need to set expectations for our children, our coaches and ourselves about being good sports. We need to be willing to follow through with those expectations.

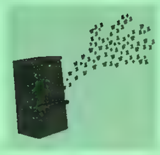
Expectations for good-sport behavior:

1. Do your best at all times.
2. Use your mistakes to learn.
3. If someone on your team or the other team does well, tell them you thought so.
4. If someone on your team or the other team makes a mistake, tell them "good try." Never make fun of someone else's misfortune.
5. Listen respectfully to the coach and try to follow directions to the best of your ability.
6. If someone calls you a name or does something to upset you, do not retaliate. Tell the coach or a parent if it is really upsetting to you.

The most difficult area for all of us is the need to confront when it comes to unsporting behavior. As a first step, for myself I have created the following statements of understanding.

1. Unsporting behavior is equal to un-Christlike behavior.
2. Unsporting behavior is unacceptable coming from my child.
3. My child will not participate on a team where the coach does not use and promote good-sport conduct.
4. I will not sit by silently and let go, without action or comment, unsporting behavior from a parent to a child or from a coach to a child.
5. I will actively discuss with others my commitment to good-sport behavior.
6. I will actively work at confessing my sins regarding unsporting behavior.

I believe God does play ball because God is with us in whatever we do. Every moment of every day we are teaching our children about God. Be "salt and light" to the world, in this case the playing field, and insist on good sport/Christlike behavior from everyone involved.


Brakel Beehive Page 2

The Wise Painter Page 3

Local Men Page 4

Mennonite Men

THE Mennonite

OCTOBER 22, 1996

Sermon in Sioux Falls

Many in Sioux Falls, S.D., celebrate Christmas with joy and are thrilled at its miracles. But all too often it is a time of loneliness and frustration in Sioux Falls' Riverside neighborhood. Riverside attracts poorly paid working-class families and refugees seeking new life in a new land. Area housing has some of the lowest rents in a city without adequate low-rent housing. For many in Riverside Christmas is a sad reminder of their economic condition.

Last Christmas, the Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church was preparing to celebrate the first anniversary in its new meetinghouse. Preparation for the Christmas project began the previous August when the congregation participated in the annual "Riverside Rummage" with a sale at the church. A special October offering added to the funds. Finally, Mennonite Mutual Aid contributed a community service matching grant.

Four needy families were identified with the help of an elementary school principal. Church members contacted these households to ask how they might help them. Thanks to this cooperation between the congregation, community leaders and the broader church, these neighborhood families enjoyed a merrier Christmas. One recipient declared that the help she received was "a miracle."

(continued on page 2)

Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Sermon in Sioux Falls —

(Continued from page 1)

The congregation had purchased the Riverside Presbyterian Church building the previous December and began worshiping there in January 1995. Counter to conventional wisdom, Sermon on the Mount chose a low-income area in which to serve. Sermon on the Mount continues to pursue ways to minister to the neighborhood and around the world. Members have been instrumental in founding a Self-Help Crafts store, the Minn-Kota MCC (Mennonite Central Committee) Relief Sale, and a local victim-offender reconciliation program. This has been in cooperation with other congregations. Members also take turns annually at "The Banquet," a soup kitchen for needy families. This includes sitting down to visit with those served.

The latest "miracle" which Sermon on the Mount expects to realize is the establishment of a Sioux Falls Mennonite Voluntary Service unit. This has been approved by the MVS office in Newton, Kan. A local doctor has donated a house for the unit. A local MVS committee is in conversation with potential volunteers. The congregation hopes that by the second anniversary in Riverside, the unit will be reaching out all year long.

Of course the congregation gives serious attention to spiritual nurture of its children and adults. Not only regular worship and Sunday school, but also small groups are available. Deacons and other leaders study and pray before their meetings. Members are encouraged to have a spirit of service in their vocations. Few "just attend," almost all are fully involved in congregational life.

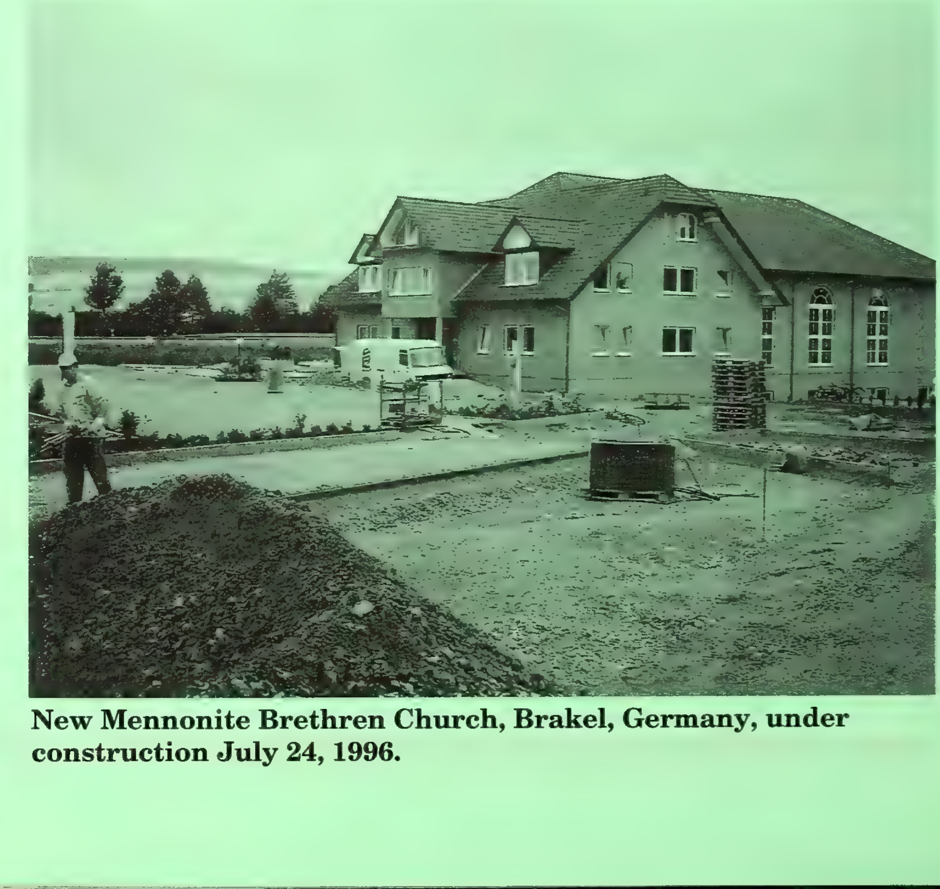
Mennonite Men has chosen the Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church for a Tenth Man Grant of $22,500, to be granted in 1997. Contributions will help draw down existing loans on the building and pay for needed roof repairs on an otherwise sound and serviceable structure.

Beehive in Brakel

My wife and I visited several beautiful churches in Germany this summer while visiting relatives. But seeing volunteers completing a large new Mennonite meetinghouse touched me the most. These recent "Aussiedler" (Mennonites from Asia) swarmed over the site, planting flowers, scattering gravel, hanging wallpaper and laying ceramic floor tile. Images of a beehive and building the wall of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's time floated through my head.

Less than 10 years in Germany, these Mennonites were building a beautiful, carefully planned church that can seat 1,000. The Sunday school rooms are large, bright and well equipped. Mostly blue-collar wage earners, the builders also gave generously to make this house of worship possible. Due to living in three- and four-generation households, teens and 70-year-olds worked comfortably side by side.

Are bricks and mortar important in the face of world hunger, violence and broken homes? These newly arrived Mennonites say yes! They want a decent place to worship and to make a bold witness that Jesus Christ is Lord. In the face of Euro-American secularism they want to be God's people and to raise their children to be Christians. Building a meetinghouse with their own hands is one way to achieve this. They gave inspiration to the volunteer aspect of constructing new church buildings.



Heinz Janzen

New Mennonite Brethren Church, Brakel, Germany, under construction July 24, 1996.

Hang it up!

This poster, that is!

Mennonite Voluntary Service

is celebrating

50 years of service!

Please display this poster in your church or home. Make sure to read the invitation that appears on the back of this poster. Call us for more information.

Join us in responding to

Christ's call to action!

50 Years!

Face the Faces

Photo by Carolyn Prieb • Design by Chuck Neufeld • Printed in USA • 0996

Mennonite Voluntary Service

MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church

722 Main, Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114 • 316/283-5100
600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4 • 204/888-6781

An invitation:

Mennonite Voluntary Service is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Since 1946, thousands of individuals have served in more than fifty communities throughout Canada and the United States. In 1996 MVS continues its long-standing commitment to working with local congregations.

MVS needs your help! Every day we are in touch with many more needs than we are able to respond to. The limiting factors are easily identified: people and money.

- **Is it possible that you are called** to leave your present situation in order to respond to a need in another community? Let us know! We would love to talk to you about this possibility.
- **Are you able to support MVS financially?** If you wish to invest in a Christian service activity that is radically committed to peace and justice, look no further! We promise you this: Every dollar received will assist us in making it possible for communities to afford otherwise unaffordable services! Please join us in this effort.
- **Share this invitation with others.** If you believe that MVS is an important and effective program of the General Conference Mennonite Church, and if you have a heart for the assignment that is ours, please encourage others to participate! Tell them about the service assignments available. Tell them about how their financial gifts will be put to use in MVS!

Thank you for considering this invitation!

MENNONITE VOLUNTARY SERVICE

722 Main St., Box 347
Newton, Kansas 67114
USA

316/283-5100

600 Shaftesbury Blvd.,
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
CANADA

204/888-6781

***Associated Mennonite Service Programs:** In the spirit of increased unity between the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, MVS and the service programs of the Mennonite Board of Missions are making all major program decisions collaboratively. Until full merger takes place, we are calling our association the Associated Mennonite Service Programs.*

Merl Lehman, Sign Painter

For many years Merl Lehman had been a familiar sight in Wayne County, Ohio, wearing paint-spattered clothing, driving an old weather-beaten station wagon. The J. M. Smucker semi-trailers bore his elaborate design of jelly and words.

Earlier in his life he had studied art at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Then he traveled up and down the West Coast, picking oranges and doing other odd jobs here and there. Finally he settled down in Kidron, Ohio, to a 60-year marriage to Florence Jenny. He also settled into a strong Christian faith and was an articulate and sharp protagonist for his Lord and a life of discipleship. He was a staunch member of the Salem Mennonite Church in Kidron. He grew through constant reading. His chief weakness was snacking on Swiss cheese.

Besides sign and house painting, Merl served as a mentor to boys, teaching them about geology, birds and the plant life of the area. Though working on a blue-collar vocational level, he was often sought out by business leaders for his wisdom. He served as an officer in his church and on the local school board. Later he devoted time to the Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale. His feature articles appeared frequently in the *Wooster Daily Record*.

I remembered Merl as a genuinely caring person, always willing to take on responsibilities which others refused. To me he was a model Christian man, a real "Mennonite Man." He passed from this life last June.

PROGRESS IN AURORA

At the September 8 ground breaking of Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora, Colo., the four officers of Mennonite Men presented them with a check for $40,000. This was the bulk of their promised $50,000 Tenth Man Grant. The remaining $10,000 will be given to them as soon as donations permit. Officers anticipate that generous Tenth Man contributions in 1997 will make possible the completion of Peace Church's grant and the full grant to the Sermon on the Mount congregation, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Yes, I would like to help new Mennonite churches!

☐ I want to give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year, to help new Mennonite churches buy or build their first permanent meetinghouse. I understand I will be contacted when my contribution is needed.

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of $__________.

Name____

Address______________________________________

Phone __________________ Home congregation ____________________

Return this form to: Tenth Man, c/o Carl Thieszen, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117
or Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Printed in U.S.A.

Area Conference Mennonite Men

Area conference men provide scholarships to students at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Central District and Western District Mennonite Men take offerings for this at their popular retreats and annual banquets. Some local groups also send in offerings.

Northern District and the two Pacific Conference Mennonite Men take offerings for scholarships once a year at their respective conference meetings.

Men and women belonging to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada channel their gifts for seminary scholarships through "The Company of 1,000." This excellent program provides generous seminary scholarships for students from Canada.

Quartet at Northern District Conference

Local Men Report

Hoffnungsau Mennonite Men (Inman, Kan.) had a breakfast meeting in January and in small groups discussed, "What is a man?" They took an offering for the Mennonite Central Committee sale expenses.

In March they sponsored a basketball team from their church going to the Western District Tournament. The same month they hosted an annual family night at the McPherson YMCA. Once a month the men serve a meal at a soup kitchen at Hutchinson.

Carl Hege reports, "For the last two years men have been meeting in the Fellowship Hall of the *First Mennonite Church (Aberdeen, Idaho)* for a breakfast Bible study. We cook a very traditional breakfast, feasting on biscuits and gravy or sausage, rolls, coffee and scrambled eggs.

"The 6:15 a.m. meal is followed by a Bible study in which we all sit at a large table with open Bibles, while the Baptist pastor leads the discussion. After the Bible study, we share prayer concerns and have a brief time of prayer, then we all pitch in to clean up the kitchen. We run about 10 to 18 participants, with fewer during harvest. We adjourn during the summer.

"Participants come from several area churches with Mennonites the majority. The men of our church are semi-mobilized to participate in local service projects as needs arise."

Mennonite Men Alive and Well

In late June and early July I attended three area Mennonite conferences, meeting in Freeman, S.D.; Dallas, Texas, and San Diego, Calif. In each place I met sturdy Christian men, active in the lives of their churches. We can thank God for the riches of his grace at work among us. Unordained men and women work side by side with pastoral leaders to make possible a full-fledged congregational life. Men and women gather in various ways for study, prayer and service. Our churches see many men worshiping on Sunday morning.

General Conference Mennonite Men offers counsel to local congregations in upgrading men's work, but we do not have a canned program that fits everywhere. Our common project is supporting new mission congregations through our Tenth Man church building program.

I will complete my service as Mennonite Men coordinator early next year, but our organization intends to carry on. As do all organizations and agencies, we will change over the years, but not in foundational truths and purposes. Mennonite Men began in 1950 to meet the needs of active men at that time. Mennonite Men is open to the situation of men in 1996. Please send in your suggestions.

Heinz Janzen, Coordinator

Heinz Janzen, Editor
Mennonite Men insert in *The Mennonite*
Published annually
P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

News

Large churches must recognize size matters

Hesston, Kan. (GCMC)—"Mennonites are still thinking small, not only in terms of size but also style," said Roland Reimer.

Compared to other denominations, Mennonites, for the most part, do not have big churches, said Reimer, who spoke here at a Sept. 9-11 meeting of pastors of larger, multiple-staff congregations.

The 62 participants represented General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Mennonite Brethren (MB) congregations ranging in size from 200 to 800.

Most came from towns and rural communities in south central Kansas, although a few traveled from out-of-state locations.

"Why can't Mennonites buy into big?" asked Reimer, MB conference minister from Wichita, Kan. Our roots as an immigrant, primarily rural people make it hard for us to reach the large-church mentality, he said.

Mennonites also worry, he said, that a large congregation violates the covenant community we value.

But, argued Reimer, history has shown God's people gather in small and large groups. "What is important is good communication," he said.

The pastors agreed with Reimer's view that big can, indeed, be beautiful. However, many felt ill-prepared to deal with the realities of a larger, multiple-staff congregation.

"I always assumed I would be a pastor, not a coordinator of a management team," said Randy Klaassen, pastor at Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Altona, Man.

Others shared how hard it was to convince their members to think big. At Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, rural Goessel, Kan., some members questioned the need for more staff, especially since the congregation was the same size as 30 years ago, said pastor Dennis Schmidt.

Sometimes attitudes about growth in staff or membership are determined by location. Marvin Zehr, conference minister for the GC Western District Conference, noted that often the rural church is geared toward maintenance, while the urban church expects growth.

David Mann, pastor at Hesston Mennonite Church, encouraged open discussion about the implications of size. He had his congregation examine this issue during one worship service.

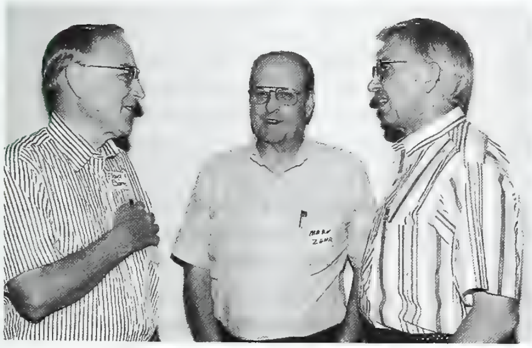
There was "an 'aha' response" as the members looked at where they fit in a profile of church size, said Mann.

"When you are smaller, you can rely on the wisdom within the body," he added. "With a larger church, you need to do more research. You also need more definition on who has authority to make decisions. ... You can't use consensus."

Howard Keim, assistant professor of communications at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan., noted that it is critical for the pastor to understand the rhythm of a church. Lois Hochstetler, a social worker from Hutchinson, Kan., spoke about nurturing staff relationships. Pastors need to know the history of their position within the church, she said.

The group also heard about models of successful decision-making from staff at three Kansas churches.

The covenant community does not have to disappear in a large church, said John Warkentin, pastor at First Mennonite Brethren Church, Wichita, if the decision-making process is inclusive. *Carla Reimer*


Carla Reimer

Thinking big: *From left, Western District Conference associate conference minister Floyd Bartel, WDC conference minister Marvin Zehr and Mennonite Brethren conference minister Roland Reimer enjoy a break during the large-church conference held near Hesston, Kan.*

Inside the news

Menno mediator says reconciliation like a dance / p. 14

Colombian works for peace with justice / p. 15

Applicants like volunteer assignments / p. 16

North Korean famine exceeds Ethiopia's in the '80s / p. 18

Lee Snyder was inaugurated as the eighth president of Bluffton (Ohio) College on Sunday, Oct. 6, capping a week of homecoming events at the college.

• • •

Henri J.M. Nouwen, well-known speaker and writer on Christian spirituality, died unexpectedly Sept. 21 of a heart attack while visiting his native Netherlands. He was 64.

• • •

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary will hold a "Seminary Sampler" Nov. 3-4 at the AMBS campus in Elkhart , Ind. The event is designed to introduce the seminary to prospective students. Housing and meals are provided, with a small travel subsidy available. Contact Andrew Kreider at 1-800-964-2627 or e-mail goambs@aol.com.

• • •

The Clinton administration has greatly increased U.S. arms exports worldwide. America's arms industry has gone from a 13 percent share of the pre-Cold War global market to about 70 percent today. In the seven years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States has become the world's leading exporter of conventional weapons. (*Karl Shelly*)

At least 17 Mennonite churches in Indiana and Michigan held services outdoors recently to show solidarity with those whose churches burned in a wave of suspected arson fires that destroyed African-American churches this year. Many of the parking lot services took place on Sept. 8, the same day the newly built Mount Zoar Baptist Church in Boligee, Ala., constructed with the help of Mennonite Disaster Service, was dedicated. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund concedes there will be no hearing on the Peace Tax Fund Bill this year. A Peace Tax Fund would allow conscientious objectors to pay taxes in full but have the part equal to the current military portion paid into a fund for nonmilitary purposes. Supporters had hoped for a hearing before lead sponsor Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) retires in November, but they still feel positive about the bill's chances of being heard next year. (*Gospel Herald*)

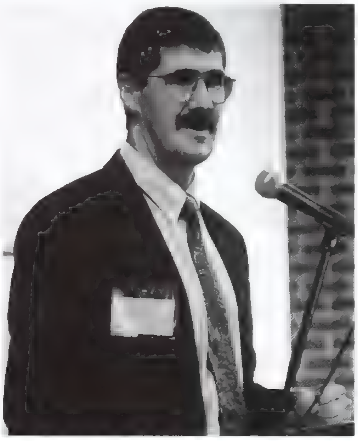
• • •

In September, Mennonites in Oregon and Virginia took part in protests against the death penalty. In Oregon, members of several Mennonite churches joined a vigil at the Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem, where the state performed its first execution in 34 years on Sept. 5. The vigil coincided with a previously planned march of 45 miles from Portland to Salem. In Virginia, members of the Richmond, Va., and Washington voluntary service units participated in kick-off activities on Sept. 22 in Richmond for an anti-death penalty project being conducted in Virginia. Sister Helen Prejean, author of the book *Dead Man Walking*, which inspired a movie of the same name, spoke to a standing-room-only crowd after a rally and march.

Menno mediator: Reconciliation is like a dance

Chicago (MBM)—As he worked with Moravian pastors to bring reconciliation between Sandinistas and contras in Nicaragua, John Paul Lederach saw them role-playing the four virtues in Psalm 85:10: “Truth and mercy will meet together. Justice and peace shall kiss.”

“Truth wants to break things out and talk about it,” said Lederach. “Mercy wants to get on with it. Justice fears peace. Peace just wants everybody to get along.”


Tom Price

Lederach

Lederach delivered the opening address to more than 200 people Sept. 20 at the 10th anniversary U.S. Conference of Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding.

“How do you create the social space where it is possible for people who represent the voices of truth and justice and mercy and peace to meet? What do we call this place where they meet?” said Lederach, professor of peace and conflict studies at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. “That place is called reconciliation.”

Lederach said that during the 1980s, in that Nicaraguan village, he realized for the first time that reconciliation involves “traveling” to a specific place where enemies meet.

Lederach likened reconciliation to a dance in which four partners trade places as the center of attention.

“Is peace the child of justice or does peace create the conditions for truth and mercy to emerge? I don't think it's possible to achieve true and deep reconciliation if one of those is missing. It means the others are less than they are.”

Lederach detailed his efforts at conciliation in Cambodia, El Salvador, Kenya, Nicaragua and Northern Ireland. He retold the story of Esau and Jacob, using it as “a biblical backbone” for the journey from conflict to reconciliation.

“What makes it possible for Jacob to turn his face toward his enemy? What makes it possible for Esau, the person who was deeply oppressed, to turn and move toward the very person who has produced his injustice?” Lederach said.

“One of the most perplexing things we face in this world [is] the turn. The journey is no longer away from [the conflict] … It is toward conflict and toward the enemy. You turn your face and move toward some of those things you fear the absolute most.”

For Lederach, this turn represented more than just theory as he worked toward reconciliation in Nicaragua in the 1980s.

“In that process, things happened that I had never experienced … from threats against my family to plots to kidnap my 3-year-old daughter and assassinate me.

“I never knew what it was like to be hated until I was hated. I never knew what it was like to be really, really angry at someone who was messing my life up.”

People in conflict sometimes need to “journey away from each other for a time” before they are able to directly face the conflict between them, he said. As people make that turn, they inevitably will wrestle with themselves, their enemy and their God.

“The journey toward reconciliation has to provide a space for anger and righteous indignation. In too many places I have seen the rivers of pain, of anger and righteous indignation,” he said.

“We need to start by putting our feet deeply into the river of reality to see how far and deep this pain runs and the realities that many people continue to face.

“Reconciliation is not to forgive and forget. Reconciliation is to remember and change,” Lederach said.

But when reconciliation occurs, as it did with Jacob and Esau, the encounter often is beyond human comprehension.

To the enemy, who has once again become his brother, Jacob says, “To see your face is like seeing the face of God.” *Tom Price*

Colombian works for peace with justice

[**Editor's note:** *The following interview with Ricardo Esquivia, director of JustaPaz, a justice and peace program of the Colombian Mennonite Church, is excerpted from UTOPIAS, Volume 4, Number 31, January-February 1996.*]

How do you see the Colombian situation from the perspective of the work you are doing?

Jon Warren (MCC)

Colombia is a country that has been at war [internally] for 45 years. ... Some have come to the conclusion that Colombia is a country with a culture of violence and, therefore, there is nothing to be done. ... However, living and working with the people of Colombia, one finds that they are not violent but rather they may be forced to become violent.

We share the belief that it is not the nature of human beings, nor of Colombians, to be violent and that the culture of violence needs to be rethought.

Where did the idea of developing a method of negotiated solutions to conflicts come from?

It comes from a theological idea of the Mennonite church. We look for and use the biblical concept ... of shalom, in which peace only results from justice.

When we speak of peacemaking, we are thinking of two factors: education in nonviolence and human rights. Human rights are not established by lawyers nor by the state; rather they are a way of life. We believe that in order to defend human rights without violating them, it is necessary to do so using an active nonviolence. All of this is based on the message of Jesus Christ.

How do you carry out your work in concrete ways?

We want to help young people learn to serve their country in new ways, utilizing direct nonviolent action as a political tool and helping them learn to make appeals based on their rights, to mobilize the community and to put pressure on the state to use the funds that they are spending for the solution of problems.

We work with a program that we call reconciliation. It is a sacred ministry of Christians to try to be reconcilers in the midst of the society in which they find themselves. This program has three components: conciliation, conciliation in the justice system and conciliation in schools.

Conciliation is a type of mediation. We train people who come from different churches, nongovernmental organizations and the government itself. The mediator does not resolve conflicts but helps analyze and create a climate that favors solutions. We have a conciliation center. The Ministry of Justice has declared that conflicts resolved there are as binding as a decision of a court.

> ***"The culture of violence needs to be rethought."***
> ***Ricardo Esquivia***

In the conciliation in the justice system we work together to train people who in turn can help resolve conflict peacefully in their neighborhoods and towns.

Regarding conciliation in schools, we believe that it is important to transform the way children think, to teach them to be peacemakers in their surroundings.

What kinds of demands does this process make on those who are involved?

From my point of view, you can't construct a positive peace without an inclusive and holistic spirituality. That is, it's not you on one side and nature on the other, but rather you are part of the natural order. You have to understand that whatever affects nature also affects you. This is all made concrete in a style of living, without a belief that we have a corner on the truth.

As we progress, it is interesting to see how people come to realize that there is no separation between theory and practice and that one has to become involved in a way of living because only by doing so can one become an agent of peace.

University of Illinois researchers say job performance improves by an average of 10 percent when workers listen to their favorite music. (*The Marketplace*)

• • •

For the third time, well-known artist P. Buckley Moss has donated prints of a new limited edition work to benefit Mennonite Central Committee's work in Africa. One hundred percent of the purchase price of the prints will go to MCC. For more information, call Peter Passage at (717) 859-3889 or e-mail pcp@mccus.org.

• • •

First Mennonite Church of Calgary celebrated its 50th anniversary Oct. 11-13. The church began May 29, 1946, the only Mennonite church in Calgary at that time.

• • •

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., was named a "best value" among regional liberal arts colleges in the Midwest by *U.S. News and World Report* in its Sept. 23 issue. Bethel was the only Kansas college to be named a "best value" in its category. The magazine also ranked Goshen (Ind.) College and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., among the best regional liberal arts colleges.

• • •

The third Christian Peacemaker Congress will be held in Washington Dec. 27-30, sponsored by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and New Call to Peacemaking. The program includes a public witness event, a variety of workshops and interest groups and testimonials from CPTers working in Haiti, Washington and Hebron. Keynote speaker Lucius Walker, an African-American pastor, founder of Pastors for Peace, will address the congress. For more information contact CPT, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 455-1199; or New Call to Peacemaking, 728 Fulton St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1958.

Grace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Ore., celebrated its centennial Oct. 4-6. The congregation was organized as Zion Mennonite on Oct. 25, 1896, and the name was changed in 1933. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

•••

The *New York Times* reports that France, once dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, now has more psychics than priests. In 1994, more than 40,000 psychics, astrologers and mediums registered with the government for income tax purposes, compared with 26,000 Catholic priests and 6,000 psychiatrists. (*Faith Today*)

•••

A poll by Angus Reid Inc. of Canada shows that while regular churchgoers make up one-third of Canada's population, they constitute half of Canadians who say they contribute to overseas relief. Fifty-nine percent of those who attend church weekly say they give to the poor overseas, compared with 42 percent of monthly attenders and 22 percent of those who never attend. Also, half of regular attenders say they do volunteer work, compared with one-third of those who never attend. (*ChristianWeek*)

•••

British Columbia's Fraser Valley has hosted the Abbotsford Air Show for the past 35 years. In response to the showcasing of military aircraft, Christian activists have sponsored the Fraser Valley Arts and Peace Festival as a creative protest since 1992. Organized by Langley Mennonite Fellowship, Project Ploughshares and the Anglican Peace and Justice Unit, this year's festival was held in Abbotsford July 29-Aug. 11. It included art exhibits, peaceful protest and workshops on peace-related issues. Alberta author Rudy Wiebe was one of the presenting artists. About 200 people attended his reading of a piece commissioned by the festival, "Believing is not seeing" which, though not explicitly about the air show, reflected Wiebe's views on the event. (*ChristianWeek*)

Applicants like volunteer assignments

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—[**Editor's note:** *This is the second in a series of three articles about three young adults who applied to Mennonite Voluntary Service in early 1996. In the first article, Phil Schmidt and Marla Gaeddert, both from Newton, Kan., were hoping for assignments in Seattle, while Mike Schmidt, Waterloo, Ont., was looking for an assignment with a Spanish-speaking agency in Texas.*]

When Mike Schmidt accepted a voluntary service assignment with an agency that helps Spanish-speaking refugees in McAllen, Texas, it was a tough decision.

Schmidt could have had a similar assignment in Dallas. But McAllen is only seven miles from the border of Mexico, while Dallas is more than 450 miles away.

"I wanted to be surrounded by the Hispanic culture. The work in McAllen felt more immediate," says Mike, who recently completed his second year at the University of Waterloo (Ont.).

Dream job: *Mike Schmidt, pictured in an earlier assignment in Guatemala, is now a voluntary service worker in McAllen, Texas.*

Consequently, he signed up for a year-long assignment, beginning Aug. 17, with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) in McAllen. The Dallas assignment would have been through Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS), the agency with which Mike first applied.

MBM and MVS routinely share applications. MVS is a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

In McAllen, Mike serves as a paralegal for the Border Association for Refugees from Central America, an ecumenical organization striving to challenge, through networking and advocacy, the institutions that affect the lives of refugees.

It was the kind of voluntary service assignment Mike had hoped for. "I liked the fact that I will be able to experience firsthand what it is like to do immigration and advocacy work. It's something I could have never experienced through classes in university," he says.

Mike, who has already served short-term assignments in Guatemala, believes it is important for whites to be in situations where they are in the minority.

"It makes you feel less confident to be the only person from your race on a bus and to have people staring at you because of that," he says, noting that after this kind of experience, an individual is more likely to be sensitive toward minorities in the future.

While Mike ended up with his dream location and job, Phil and Marla Schmidt (no relation to Mike) didn't quite find what they were looking for.

The couple, who were married June 22, had thought they would move to Seattle for a two-year assignment. The West Coast setting appealed to them, in part, because of the opportunities for camping and hiking.

Marla, who worked at United Methodist Youthville in Newton, Kan., wanted a social work position. Phil, who recently graduated from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., with a degree in biology, was interested in an assignment with an environmental agency or Habitat for Humanity.

When the couple returned from their honeymoon in early July, they were faced with the reality that there still were no openings for them in Seattle. They met with MVS staff to consider the alternatives and subsequently decided to go to Sioux Falls, S.D., the site of a new unit.

While Phil and Marla were disappointed that Seattle wasn't a viable option for them, they are excited about being the first two volunteers to arrive in Sioux Falls. Their assignments began Oct. 1.

Marla will be working with refugees

at Lutheran Social Services. Sioux Falls is one of 10 centers for refugee relocation in the United States, she says. As a result, the refugees come from countries around the world. Phil will be working with at-risk youth at Turning Point and as a unit house manager.

The couple says it was helpful for them to attend the MVS orientation in August. "It was awesome to be surrounded by people who had the same focus on God," Marla says. "It made us realize that there is a bigger network of support. It's not just us." *Carla Reimer*

Seeing things in a new perspective

Seven young adults from Toronto Chinese Mennonite and eight from Waterloo (Ont.)-area churches participated in an overseas learning experience this summer. Willard Metzger, pastor at Community Mennonite Church in Moorefield, Ont., organizes an overseas learning tour for area young adults every year. This is the first time that the group has represented two ethnic groups.

They met with China Educational Exchange workers in China as well as university students. In Taiwan and Hong Kong, the participants were responsible for youth camp programs, and a number preached in local churches. The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church has mission personnel in all three places.

As a result of his experiences in Asia, at least one participant is re-evaluating what is important to him. For the last two years, Brian Quan (back row, second from left), a lay leader among English speakers at Toronto Chinese, has felt a strong pull to enter the ministry. "This trip has provided additional affirmation for me to go in that direction," says Quan, who has been conducting drug and alcohol addiction research since 1991.

"Once you go overseas, you see things in a different perspective," he says. "I came away thinking how important it is for a person to have God in their lives. People who strive only for financial success are missing out. Everyone has a deep spiritual need for God." ***Carla Reimer***

Two Mennonite composers won cash awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) recently. J. Harold Moyer, emeritus professor of music at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Larry Warkentin, chair of the music department at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College, were each given one of the awards, which are based on a writer's catalog of original compositions as well as recent performances of the composer's work, and are given to assist and encourage the composers.

• • •

Residents of the tiny, ancient village of Samaria on the West Bank are being pressured by Israeli archaeologists to change their centuries-old religious practices in order to accommodate archaeological digging. The archaeologists want to excavate on Mount Gerizim for traces of ancient temple-worship comparable to that of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (the Dome of the Rock stands atop the presumed site of the Second Temple). Mount Gerizim remains the most sacred place to the remnant of Samaritans, who number probably no more than 500. (*Christian Peacemaker Teams*)

• • •

An informal consortium of Mennonite historical societies invites submission of papers and proposals for an upcoming conference entitled "One People, Many Stories: Comparing Mennonite Experiences in the United States and Canada through the 20th Century." The conference is scheduled for Oct. 23-25, 1997, at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C. *Mennonite Quarterly Review* is interested in publishing some of the conference proceedings. Send proposals or papers to, or obtain more information from, Perry Bush, Planning Committee, History Dept., Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; (419) 358-3278; e-mail bushp@bluffton.edu. All materials must be postmarked no later than Jan. 10, 1997. There is a limited number of travel subsidies for speakers and student participants.

***Executive Book Summaries* says that more information has been generated in the last 30 years than in the previous 5,000. More than 4,000 books are published every day. One weekday edition of the *New York Times* contains more information than the average person encountered in an entire lifetime in 17th-century England. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)**

• • •

***Insight* reports that fewer than two dozen seminaries in the United States and Canada offer courses in singles ministry, despite a dramatic increase in the number of unmarried adults. Single-person households have increased by 18 percent over the past decade. While supermarkets, restaurants and network TV all cater to this group, the church "seems uncomfortable with anyone who stays single beyond youth-group age," says writer Julia Duin. She says few congregations have singles on their church boards, which contributes to single people's wariness of organized religion. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)**

• • •

A scholarship fund intended to encourage women to serve through the sciences has been established at Goshen (Ind.) College in memory of Alicia Showalter Reynolds by her parents and husband, Mark. She was abducted from her car March 2 near Culpeper, Va., and her body was found May 7 in the woods near Lignum, Va., a victim of homicide. At the time of her death, Showalter Reynolds, a 1992 Goshen graduate with majors in chemistry and biology, was a fourth-year doctoral student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where she was working on a vaccine against schistosomiasis, a disease that afflicts millions of people in developing countries. The Alicia Showalter Reynolds Women in Science Scholarship will give $2,500 awards to outstanding women who aspire to a career in science, particularly in research or teaching, and who demonstrate leadership in campus and community activities. (*Wayne Steffen*)

North Korean famine exceeds Ethiopia's in '80s

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Rice and maize fields carpet the landscape. Yet many of these fields in South Hwanghae and Kangwon provinces, North Korea, will produce nothing.

Rain flooded the fields at a critical growing point, preventing seedlings from maturing.

Just as the deceptively green fields don't appear damaged, so hunger in famine-stricken North Korea looks different than you might imagine, says Al Kehler, who returned in September from North Korea. Kehler is program coordinator of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada is a member.

"North Korea's food shortage is more severe than Ethiopia's was in the early 1980s, but I didn't see people dying," says Kehler. "However, everyone—without exception—is thin."

In Ethiopia, food shortages affected a small segment of the population, while in North Korea the shortage is spread throughout the country. People are struggling to cope by "dividing up the shortages," says Kehler, and warns by next year the situation will be "very bad."

"The image that captures my fears for North Korea is one of a boat filled with 22 million people being drawn toward a precipice," says Kehler. "We must find a way to … prevent them from going over the edge."

Poor economic planning by the North Korean government and several natural disasters have contributed to the country's food shortage.

Rick Fee

Over the edge: *North Koreans wait in line to receive food. The entire country is suffering a food shortage.*

Last year, isolated North Korea launched an unprecedented appeal to the world for help. The response has been lukewarm.

In 1996 the Canadian Foodgrains Bank has supplied nearly 4.4 million metric tons of rice, enough to feed 440,000 people for a month. MCC has contributed money and canned meat.

While in North Korea, Kehler observed four distribution centers. He was touched by one woman who learned enough English to carefully say thank you for the rice.

"It was very humbling and gratifying to feel this connection," he says. "She realized people somewhere cared for her, and she had found someone to thank."

Later Kehler visited the home of an elderly rural couple who pointed out marks on the walls, indicating how floodwater had filled their house. They had brought their pig into the house to keep him safe, they said. The couple had just received some rice and with broad smiles thanked Kehler several times.

Kehler also visited a clinic, where he quizzed a doctor about young children's health.

"When we monitor food and hunger issues, we try to determine how children under 5 are doing," explains Kehler. "Because these are critical developmental years, young children tend to show the effects of famine first."

Kehler was glad to hear of no noticeable change in young children's weight; the doctor said adults, particularly parents, give their rations to the children. But students ages 8 to 17 are thinner, and babies born during the last year are smaller than usual.

Kehler expects to meet with Canadian government officials this month to discuss what he saw in North Korea. Typically, food and cash donations to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank are matched at a ratio of four to one under an agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency.

However, North Korea is not on the Canadian government's list of eligible recipients. Kehler hopes an exception can be made for North Korea, but says even if the Canadian government refuses to help, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank will continue to make sending food to North Korea a top priority. *Pearl Sensenig*

Record

DEATHS

Myrtle Goering Unruh, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., died Sept. 23 at age 79. She and her husband, Robert, served 32 years with Mennonite Central Committee in the Paraguayan Chaco.

MINISTERS

Terry Bartel is assistant pastor at Coaldale (Alta). Church.

Abe Buhler is interim pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Ray Landis is conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and the Northwest Conference of the Mennonite Church.

John A. Miller was ordained as pastor at First Church, San Francisco, Sept. 22.

Akron Mennonite Church is seeking an **associate pastor**, beginning immediately. The associate pastor shares with the pastor in the total pastoral task, giving primary attention to the younger households and families of the church. There is flexibility in the assignment, though expectations include small-group work and preaching. M. Div. preferred and experience required.

Inquiries can be directed to **Search Committee Chair, Akron Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 208, Akron, PA 17501; fax (717) 859-3942**.

Admissions Counselor. 11-month, full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferably from a Mennonite college. Responsible for new student recruitment primarily in Virginia with primary focus in public high schools. Must have an understanding of EMU programs and philosophy, knowledge of the Mennonite Church and experience relating to high school age students. Training in marketing/sales is helpful. Verbal and written communication skills required. Must be willing to travel regularly. Must have a valid driver's license and good driving record. Beginning date: Nov. 15. Application deadline: **Oct. 25.** Multiethnic persons and women are especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact the **EMU Human Resources Office, (540) 432-4108, or e-mail EbyBJ@EMU.Edu.**

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

Ken Peters is youth pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Mick Sommers is pastor at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind.

WORKERS

Lee Lehman, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, has received the 1996 Bluffton College Service Award for outstanding service to the college.

Dick and **Dorothy Rempel** will be serving in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, Oct. 1-Nov. 19, while COM workers Peter and Sue Kehler are in North America. The Rempels minister to immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Berlin with the support of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

M. Schmidt

P. Schmidt

Marla and **Phil Schmidt**, First Church, Denver, and Faith Church, Newton, Kan., began a 23-month MVS term in Sioux Falls, S.D., Oct. 1. Phil is a youth worker, Marla is a case worker at Lutheran Social Services.

Linda Vesey, Casselton (N.D.) Church, began an eight-month Youth Evangelism Service term with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Mexico.

Goshen College invites applicants for a full-time tenure-track position in the **English department**. Ph.D. required. Duties include teaching general education courses in literature and writing, preferably with one or more of the following special interests: Victorian literature, modern British literature, composition or women's literature. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, seeks faculty committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send a curriculum vitae and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660;** e-mail **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until **Dec. 15**.

One of the actions of delegates at the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren, meeting July 11-14 in Winnipeg, was to pass a resolution banning dancing, use of alcohol or showing films or videos "which violate biblical standards" at any church- or conference-sponsored event. The resolution followed an incident at the Banff '95 youth convention, where spontaneous dancing broke out among the 900 youth gathered for New Year's Eve activities that included a Christian disc jockey providing a mixture of contemporary Christian and pop songs as background music.

• • •

Juveniles comprised 19 percent of all people arrested for violent crime in the United States in 1994. The number represented less than 0.5 percent of all juveniles. Eighty-six percent of juvenile crime arrests in 1994 involved males. White males accounted for 48 percent and black males 50 percent of such arrests. The increase in juvenile deaths from homicide from the mid-1980s through 1994 is almost entirely attributable to firearms—four times more juveniles were murdered with guns in 1994 than in 1984. (*Campaign for Effective Crime Policy, Washington*)

• • •

The Churchwide Stewardship Council, a grassroots network of Mennonite Church representatives working to promote individual and congregational stewardship, had one of the largest attendances to date at its annual meeting Sept. 12-13, near Kansas City, Mo. This was partly because for the first time General Conference Mennonite Church districts were invited to send voting representatives. The major item on this year's agenda was a detailed look at The Giving Project, a five-year initiative supported by both denominations. The council endorsed the project following director Mark Vincent's presentation, and it elected Marvin Penner of Wichita, Kan., as the first GC at-large member of its executive committee. (*William R. Zuercher*)

MENNO Project: Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas (MENNO) Project is seeking 10 individuals to "vacation with a purpose" in **Colombia, Feb. 1-15, 1997**. Spend time at the Mennonite Retreat Center in Cachipay doing construction, sewing, painting, carpentry and general cleaning. MENNO Project is designed to be an educational experience as well. Time will be spent in Bogota learning about the Mennonite church by visiting churches, schools and marketplaces in Colombia. Selection is on a first-come, first-served basis. Respond early!

For more information contact **Karen McCabe-Juhnke, Commission on Overseas Mission, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100, ext. 239**; e-mail **kmj@gcmc.org**.

MVS
SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Respite Care
Berne, IN

Develop. Disabilities
Winnipeg, MB

Boys & Girls Club
Fresno, CA

Mental Health Services
Kansas City, KS

Senior Services
Fresno, CA

Mennonite Voluntary Service
PO Box 347 Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

Don't miss our special Christmas offer.

Give two gift subscriptions to

THE **Mennonite**

for the price of one.

For more information, call
1-800-757-5101.

TAUGHT BY CHRIST'S SPIRIT
FORMED BY CHRIST'S MIND

Come join our community
of learning and worship.
Select from ten programs of study.

Call toll-free: 1-800-710-7871
E-mail: yoderda@emu.edu
Web site: http://www.emu.edu

EASTERN
MENNONITE
SEMINARY

A Graduate Division of
Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Graduate Programs
at Eastern Mennonite University

Master of Arts in Counseling
Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Transformation
Master of Arts in Education
Eastern Mennonite Seminary
- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts in Church Leadership
- Master of Arts in Religion

Call 1-800-710-7871 or e-mail: *yoderda@emu.edu*
Web site: *http://www.emu.edu*

"Give me neither poverty nor riches..."
(from Proverbs 30:7-9)

trek

venture into a world of enough

Do you ever ask, "Is there 'enough' for everyone?" **trek** is a four-week guide to help you explore this question. Try living with enough! Includes stories, discussion questions and resources. Ideal for groups. Call now.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

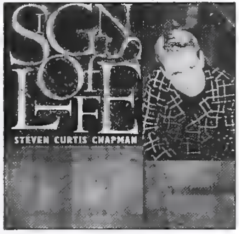
Reviews

MUSIC

PRAYER WITHOUT CEASING

Signs of Life *by Steven Curtis Chapman (Sparrow, 1996, $10.98 cassette, $16.98 CD)*

Reviewed by Melanie Mueller, editorial assistant



Sacred music for many means Bach fugues on a magnificent organ or traditional hymns sung in four-part harmony. I also find this kind of music inspiring. But when I listen to Steven Curtis Chapman, I feel I am "praying without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Chapman's newest release, *Signs of Life*, shows a grittier, more seasoned worldview than do previous recordings. Don't get me wrong—his earlier work is never one-sided or one-dimensional. Albums such as *More to This Life, The Sake of the Call* or *The Great Adventure* spark much thought on Christian social responsibility, spiritual growth and just plain joy in the knowledge of God's love for us.

The first cut of this album, "Lord of the Dance," could be the story of anyone—beginning "the dance" as a baby, not knowing the reason for the dance, looking for a deeper truth and finding it in God, discovering, "I am the heart, He is the heartbeat / I am the eyes, He is the sight / And I see clearly, I am just a body / He is the life. / I move my feet, I go through the motions / But He gives purpose to chance / I am the dancer / He is the Lord of the dance."

In recent years Chapman has devoted time to Charles Colson's Prison Fellowship. Following a visit to an inmate on death row, Chapman wrote the song, "Free," deeply stirred by the man's sense of freedom in his knowledge of God's forgiveness, even when sentenced to die.

Other cuts show Chapman's deep love for family. In "What Would I Say" (written about Chapman's grandfather, who because of "the demon in the bottle" abandoned his family), Chapman writes, "I would say I wish I could have known you / And I would say I wish you would've stayed / But most of all I would say I forgive you. … I wish you were here to hear what I would say."

In the title cut, Chapman plays this game: Pretend you are from another planet and describe the signs of life found in this world. He writes of his own home, "I've got crayons rolling around in the floorboard of my car / Bicycles all over my driveway; bats and balls all over my yard. / And there's a plastic man from outer space sitting in my chair / The signs of life are everywhere / But I've got questions rolling around in the corners of my mind / If it's true I live in a world where hope has all but died / And if I really have a living love alive in me / How am I letting it be known, how am I letting it be seen?"

In addition to sensitive and moving lyrics, Chapman gives us rich, earthy guitar accompaniment, much of it laced with Southern blues. The music by itself is a joy to listen to; add Chapman's lyrics and you will be profoundly moved. I have been.

FILMS

ROOTS AND WINGS

Fly Away Home, *written by Robert Rodat and Vince McKewin, produced by John Veitch and Carol Baum, directed by Carroll Ballard*

Reviewed by Melanie A. Zuercher, assistant editor

In 1993, a Canadian artist named Bill Lishman successfully taught a flock of Canada geese to imprint on an ultralight aircraft and follow it to Virginia, proving that humans could show wild fowl new and safer migration routes.

From this premise comes the fictional story of 13-year-old Amy Alden (Anna Paquin). Her musician mother and artist father divorced when she was 3, and she has lived in New Zealand ever since. When her mother dies tragically, Amy goes to Ontario to a father (Jeff Daniels) she hardly knows.

Amy finds a nest of orphaned goose eggs in the woods, and she is the first thing they see upon hatching. The scenes of 15 fuzzy goslings galloping after her as fast as their stubby legs will take them are priceless.

Columbia Pictures

Lame duck: *Igor, born with a bad leg, has to fly south sitting behind Anna Paquin in an ultralight plane.*

Eventually the geese grow up and want to migrate, but they don't know the way. The story follows the attempt by Amy, her father, Thomas, his girlfriend Susan (Dana Delany), brother David (Terry Kinney) and flying buddy Barry (Holter Graham) to get the geese to their winter quarters in North Carolina. In the process, Amy must learn to both trust her father and fly an ultralight aircraft herself.

This is Hollywood, so some things are a bit far-fetched—the elaborate plot to break the geese out of the "prison" where a wicked game warden puts them in preparation for clipping their wings, for example.

But the camera work is magnificent, especially the breathtaking flying shots. And the portrait of Amy as a child grieving an aching loss is realistic and tender without being overdrawn or maudlin.

Near the end of the movie, facing a scary decision, Amy says to Thomas, "I wish Mum were here." He thinks for a moment, then says, "She *is* here. She's in the geese. She's in the sky. She's all around you." And so She is.

Mission administrator, Asia: To begin June 1, 1997, appointment jointly by Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Responsibilities include representing North American agencies to partner churches and organizations in Asia, relating to overseas workers, developing mission vision and opportunities for the region. Qualifications include work experience in Asia, administrative experience, commitment to mission.

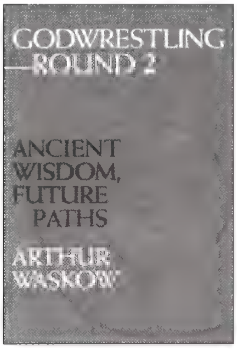
Inquire by **Dec. 15** to **Glendon Klaassen, Executive Secretary, Commission on Overseas Mission, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100** or **Rachel Stoltzfus, Director of Human Resources, Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370, (219) 294-7423.**

BOOKS

BEADS OF SALTY SWEAT

GodWrestling—Round 2: Ancient Wisdom, Future Paths *by Arthur Waskow (Jewish Lights, 1996, 338 pages, $23.95 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Mitchell Brown, Wilmette, Ill.



This book is above all an excellent introduction to the process of Jewish "midrash"—a form of theological interpretation that scrutinizes the biblical text, not for its plain sense but rather for creative readings of the story that yield a contemporary thought.

The very name "Israel" means "Godwrestler," and Waskow points out that the Jewish Bible itself is a result of this experience: "Generations of Jews after Jacob have wrestled with themselves, with other people and with God, and the sweat from the wrestlings too became the fiery letters on the parchment and paper: Torah." This wrestling did not stop with the five books of Moses; midrash is the contemporary expression of the struggle for faith.

Waskow's midrash is of a decidedly psychological cast. Using both his personal and family histories, he reads the biblical stories as if they took place in his family. Thus Jacob and Esau are Waskow and his brother; Abraham on Moriah forces Waskow to reconsider how he treated his children. The results are wildly uneven, but when Waskow scores he can affect the reader profoundly.

Mennonites will find this book helpful in its discussion of community. Waskow is one of the leaders of the Jewish Renewal Movement, in which small groups of Jews seek to establish more intense forms of religious community than they found in their institutional synagogues. The book reflects his experiences over 20 years of building such communities.

This book is well worth reading. Midrash is quite unsystematic, and at times the reader will feel lost in a jungle of Scripture and Waskow's experience. But the feeling will never last long, for every few pages Waskow's wrestle with God yields glistening beads of salty sweat.

READING WITH SUBSTANCE

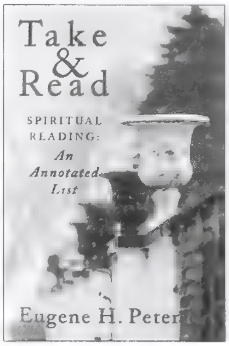
Take and Read: Spiritual Reading, An Annotated List *by Eugene Peterson (Eerdmans, 1996, 122 pages, $10) and* **The Bible for Everyday Life**, *edited by George Carey (Eerdmans, 1996, 398 pages, $20 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

Both of these books were developed as reference works that are accessible to many. Surprisingly, one delivers far less than expected and the other delivers more.

As a huge fan of Eugene Peterson, I have high expectations of anything he writes. I liked the beginning of *Take and Read*, where he notes that spiritual reading has fallen on bad times, and his point that spiritual reading "does not mean reading on spiritual or religious subjects but reading any book that comes to hand in a spiritual way, which is to say, listening to the Spirit, alert to intimations of God." In the first Peterson book I ever read, I was amazed to learn that as a pastor he took an hour or two every day in the church office to read a novel by Dostoyevsky.

Peterson notes that reading today is mostly a consumer activity—the faster the better. It is either analytical or frivolous, but we need something more. He provides a list of books he particularly recommends, grouped into a host of categories: Christian classics, prayer, spiritual formation, spiritual direction, novelists, poets, pastors, Jesus, mysteries, commentaries.



Now I was certainly interested in which books this well-read and excellent writer recommends. I even plan to follow up some of his suggestions. But at times his lists felt too subjective and arbitrary. And his comments were far too succinct. Often this felt like reading through a list of promotional book blurbs. I am not sure I will use it again.

While I have great respect for George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, I approached the second book with great caution. It seemed to promise too much for one volume: introductions to the Bible and all its books, a full outline of each book, key

To help you with your 1997 Vacation Plans,

TOURMAGINATION
is pleased to announce...

Jamaica in Winter	Feb. 21 – 28
Celebrate Paraguay	Mar. 27 – April 7
Cities of the Apostle Paul	May 10 – 23
Highlights of China	May 21 – June 12
Spectacular Scandinavia and its Fjords	June 17 – July 1
Menno Simons European Sampler	July 7 – 24
Alaska, Yukon & Inside Passage Tour/Cruise	July 9 – 19
Berlin, Luther & the Mennonite Story in Poland	Sept. 12 – 26
Australia – New Zealand	Feb. 13 – Mar. 7/98

Call 1-800-565-0451 for more information

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

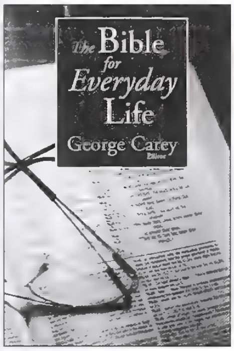
Reg. #1567624

Bible passages explained and a summary of 48 central biblical teachings.

I did not believe any one book could fulfill such a tall order, so I read skeptically. But my initial impressions were favorable.

This book emphasizes helping people realize the Bible's relevance to our own context. It is a good resource for helping many people approach the Bible, take it more seriously and even put learnings into practice. Some of the opening essays are very helpful, including a good explanation of the different kinds of biblical criticism.

The book starts becoming a little uneven in the chapters on particular books of the Bible, written by a host of different authors. Almost none includes any sense of the date when the texts were composed. Most also tell little or nothing about the biblical authors.



Some obvious things are missing. For example, a lengthy section on Genesis includes nothing about the old problem of the differences between the creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2. The Book of Job is summarized in only three pages, with nothing said about the conclusion.

I appreciated the emphasis on God's active involvement in history and the frequent references to God as Liberator. There is considerable attention given to Old Testament concerns for justice.

The final section contains brief discussions on several dozen key beliefs in the Bible: baptism, ascension, Communion, church and more. Again, the entries vary widely in depth and quality, and the reason for what was chosen and discussed is often unclear.

This is a book I can use again, even though it is uneven in its reliability and usefulness.

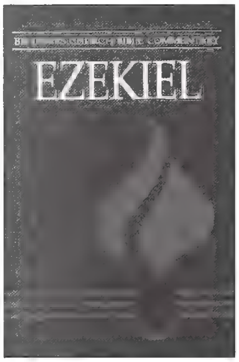
A MESSAGE TO EXILES

Ezekiel *by Millard Lind (Believers Church Bible Commentary Series, Herald Press, 1996, 416 pages, $19.98 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Wesley Bergen, Newton, Kan.

Try to think back to the last sermon you heard that was based on the Book of Ezekiel. Most of us can't do it. Lind has done pastors and lay people a service with a commentary that not only guides us into the world of Ezekiel but shows us how that world is like our own.

Lind is especially to be congratulated on the "Text in the Life of the Church" essays accompanying each section of the commentary. He consistently shows where Ezekiel can be useful for us.



There are a few places where one might take exception to Lind's approach. At times he tries too hard to make Ezekiel fit with current Anabaptist trends in scholarship. I wonder also about his insistence that Ezekiel's message was meant to be conveyed to the people of Jerusalem, given that one of the purposes of exile was to remove people's connection with their homeland. Lind might have lightly employed a hermeneutic of suspicion, and understood the anti-Jerusalem rhetoric as an apologetic for those returning from Babylon claiming to be the true Israel, a position that would logically have been ridiculous to those who had never left.

I was also hoping that Lind would say more about the gloating tone of Ezekiel's judgment oracles to the nations (Ezekiel 25-32), and use this as a springboard to talk about our attitudes toward defeated enemies.

Editorially, the numerous cross-references to other parts of the commentary are helpful but would be better placed in footnotes so as not to clutter the text. The commentary would also be more user-friendly if Lind had stuck to one main English translation rather than switching among four or five.

These are minor matters in an otherwise useful and perceptive commentary. It is largely free from historical speculation regarding the redaction of Ezekiel and concentrates more on reading the book as a message to the exiles and a message to us. A commentary of this quality will certainly increase the chances of hearing sermons on Ezekiel in the church today.

Resources

- **Hymnal Companion** (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $39.95 U.S./$55.95 Cdn.) contains stories about the hymns, tunes and resources in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* and biographies of the people who wrote them. Order from FLP toll-free at 1-800-743-2484.
- **God's Power, Jesus' Faith and World Mission** by Steve Mosher (Herald Press, 1996, $19.95 U.S./$28.50 Cdn.) is a study in Romans.
- **Through Fire & Water: An Overview of Mennonite History** by Harry Loewen and Steven Nolt (Herald Press, 1996, $14.95 U.S./$21.50 Cdn.) is readable history that includes stories, photos, maps and cartoons.
- **Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: American Mennonites Engage Washington** by Keith Graber Miller (University of Tennessee Press, 1996, $36 U.S.) details how Mennonite traditions of pacifism, humility and service have shaped the church's activities in Washington.
- **Restoring the Soul of a Church: Congregations Wounded by Clergy Sexual Misconduct**, edited by Mark Lasar and Nancy Hopkins (Alban Institute, 1996, $23.85 U.S. postpaid), is a handbook that addresses topics through case studies and first-person testimonies.
- **Congregational Megatrends** by C. Jeff Woods (Alban Institute, 1996, $19.85 U.S. postpaid) helps clergy and lay leaders understand the trends affecting today's churches and how churches might respond.
- **Study Guide: The Once and Future Church, and Transforming Congregations** by Gilbert R. Rendle (Alban Institute, 1996, $15.85 U.S. postpaid) is a study guide for the two books written by Loren Mead.
- **100 Ways You Can Stop Violence** is a pamphlet from the National Association of Social Workers. Contact NASW, 750 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 408-8600.
- **A Plea for Purity: Sex, Marriage and God** by J. Christoph Arnold (Plough Publishing House, 1996, $13 U.S. postpaid) makes a case for purity in every area of life.

**************CAR-RT SORT**C-023
034421.J 00000 513 RP1
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3007 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Be cautious about caution

Sometimes we in the church are too cautious. We don't like to make mistakes. We hesitate to try something new or go where we haven't been before. What if it backfires? What if it isn't God's will? What if it costs too much?

Sometimes we are wise to be cautious. We should not always go full steam ahead without looking for the rocks that may put a hole in our hull and sink us. But we tend to err on the side of caution rather than risk.

While Jesus spoke about caution—for example, in calling his followers to measure the cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33)—he spoke more often about taking risks. For instance, in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), the master praised the slaves who risked their talents to make more, but he condemned the one who buried his one talent in the ground for safekeeping.

> ***Part of the genius of Mennonite Voluntary Service is how it joins service and community.***

Jesus also took risks and called on his disciples to take risks. He sent out the Twelve two by two and "ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts" (Mark 6:8). When the crowd of 5,000 had nothing to eat, Jesus turned to his disciples and said, "You give them something to eat" (Mark 6:37).

Sometimes Jesus' followers succeeded, other times not. In Gethsemane, they deserted him. Nevertheless, because he had entrusted them with tasks that were risky, they learned.

Today, Jesus entrusts us with the task of "[proclaiming] the reign of God and [providing] a foretaste of the church's glorious hope," as our Confession of Faith states. If we are to be faithful to such a responsibility, we will have to take some risks. And we will make mistakes.

In this regard, thank God for Mennonite Voluntary Service. This agency of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church provides a way for the church to live out its risk-taking calling.

MVS is not designed simply to take risks, but it works with local congregations to help reach into areas the church may not be able to enter on its own.

Because of an agency that organized and provided volunteers to serve in needed ways, 19-year-old Shirley Schrag from Marion, S.D., reached out to children in the predominantly black neighborhood of Woodlawn in Chicago in the 1950s (page 4).

People of color: While many Mennonite churches in the 1960s refused to have anything to do with people of color, MVS workers Donna and Irvin Driedger from Osler, Sask., made friends with and learned from African-Americans in Gulfport, Miss., who weren't even allowed to stand in the same line as whites for a carnival ride (page 6). Their experiences in Gulfport then affected how they lived their Christian calling back in Osler.

Because of MVS, Mennonite churches have formed in urban areas and have become involved in ministries to the poor and disenfranchised. Many Mennonite couples met each other in MVS; others decided to live in a certain city because of ties they formed through MVS (pages 7-8).

Nelson and Bonita Bock, a Lutheran couple who were MVS workers in Arvada, Colo., in the mid-1980s (pages 8-9), learned that "without community, you can't do anything over the long haul." Part of the genius of MVS is how it joins service and community. It is "grounded in communal living, service to others, reduced standard of living and economic sharing," as MVS director Miles Reimer writes (page 3). Jesus emphasized each of these aspects in his teaching and the way he lived.

The community in MVS units isn't always harmonious, the service isn't always effective, and the reduced standard of living may be only a pretense. In other words, mistakes happen. Nevertheless, this service agency, part of our outreach as a church, takes us into areas of risk we may have otherwise avoided. In doing so, it calls us back to Jesus, our Lord, who calls us all to follow him, despite the risk.
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

Inside

A litany for peace in Jerusalem / p. 7

Praying with icons / p. 11

Use securities for charitable giving / p. 12

$2.00

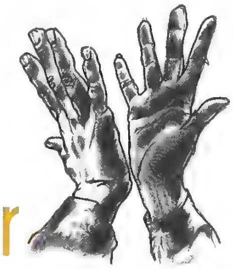
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 21
NOVEMBER 12, 1996

ELKHART
LIBRARY
NOV 15 '96

- Crying 'peace' when there is no peace (page 3)
- 'Peace must be based on justice' (page 5)
- Deceptive signs of peace (page 8)



The cry for PEACE in Jerusalem

Israeli soldiers in the West Bank

Prologue

The news from the Middle East has been sobering. Few seem to have much hope for any kind of lasting peace there. This issue looks at the situation in the West Bank and calls for a different approach from what has been taken thus far.

Melanie Zuercher, our assistant editor, interviewed Patty Shelly, Mennonite Central Committee country representative for West Bank, on Oct. 10 (pages 3-7). A delegation of MCC staff members had recently visited the West Bank. Patty and co-worker Carmen Pauls report what it's like there for the Palestinians, who are under occupation by a military force.

You may also read excerpts from a statement by Christian leaders in Jerusalem (page 5). Your congregation may want to use the litany on page 7 and pray regularly for Christians in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Wendy Lehman, who volunteers for Christian Peacemaker Teams, reports from Hebron (page 8). The signs of peace there, she warns, are deceptive.

Read J. Daryl Byler's editorial (page 24) and pray about how you should respond.

Marlene Kropf presents a way of praying while using icons (page 11).

And J.B. Miller tells us how to use securities for our charitable giving (page 12).

You may also be interested in a report on the recent meeting of the Integration Committee (page 13). *gh*

Next issue: Mennonites in India

Cover: Photo by Gordon Houser

Contents

FEATURES

3 Crying 'peace' when there is no peace

There can be no peace in the West Bank unless there is justice for Palestinians, say Christians there.

5 'Peace must be based on justice'

Excerpts from a statement of the patriarchs, bishops, clergy and people of the Christian churches in Jerusalem

7 A litany for peace in Jerusalem

8 Deceptive signs of peace

Hebronites worry because removing troops there does not equal peace.

DEPARTMENTS

10 Letters
11 Learning to pray
12 Fiscal health
13 News
18 Record
22 Reviews
23 Resources
24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Periodical postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General Conference Mennonite Church

Crying 'PEACE' when there is no PEACE

Melanie A. Zuercher

Imagine you live in Newton, Kan., or Elkhart, Ind., or Steinbach, Man., and the state or provincial government passes a law limiting your access to Wichita, or to Chicago or to Winnipeg. Without the proper documents, which are difficult to obtain, you can't enter the city to work or to shop, to go to the airport or the hospital, to visit friends or relatives, to attend a church meeting or your denomination's annual gathering.

There can be no peace in the West Bank unless there is justice for Palestinians, say Christians there.

This is what Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have been and are experiencing, says Patricia (Patty) Shelly, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) country representative for West Bank.

In late September, three days of violence rocked the area following the opening of an archaeological tunnel near the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in the Old City of Jerusalem. The mosque compound, which includes the Dome of the Rock, is the third holiest site in Islam. Muslims believe Mohammed ascended to heaven from that spot to receive part of the Qur'an (Koran). Jews and Christians say it is the place Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Fighting between Palestinian police and civilians and Israeli Defense Force soldiers, centered in Gaza and the West Bank towns of Bethlehem, Nablus, Ramallah and Halhul (near Hebron), left more than 70 people dead and at least 1,500 wounded. The Israeli government sealed the West Bank and Gaza in an attempt to stop the conflict. Repercussions have been staggering for Palestinians.

For example, the number of Palestinians allowed to cross from Gaza to go to work was cut to one-fifth, from 20,000 to 4,000. But Palestinian access to Jerusalem has been limited since long before that—from the time of the Oslo peace accords signed by Palestinian and Israeli officials in 1993, and even since Israel took the West Bank by force in 1967.

"The reality," says Patty, "is that students can't get to university. Palestinians who were born and raised in Jerusalem and may have moved to one of the suburbs, or gone abroad to study for a while, are having their Jerusalem identity cards revoked. People can't get to work. They can't feed their families."

Terre des Hommes, a Palestinian organization in Gaza with which MCC works, has documented that thousands of Palestinians are balanced on the brink of malnutrition, using

Editor's note: *The following article draws extensively on reports from Carmen Pauls, Mennonite Central Committee volunteer from Henderson, Neb., currently serving as a peace development worker in West Bank.*

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

> ***"Jerusalem is, and has been for centuries, the political, religious, economic and social hub of Palestinian life."***
>
> **Patty Shelly**

their savings to purchase staples.

Gold for rice: In Arab culture, women receive gold at marriage as social security. People do not put their money in banks, but buy gold to serve the same purpose. Amani Jouda, a Terre des Hommes nutritionist, told an MCC delegation visiting West Bank and Gaza in early October, "Women are selling their gold for food. For us, this is a shame. Women should sell their gold [to buy] a house [or] land or to send their children to university—not for rice!"

It is difficult for Palestinians to get building or renovation permits for Jerusalem, Patty says. The Jerusalem city government has even destroyed houses and buildings it claims were built illegally.

"The Israeli government wants the Palestinians to leave East Jerusalem [the "Palestinian part," annexed by Israel after the 1967 war, though the annexation went unrecognized by most countries] and establish their center elsewhere," she says.

With the Al-Aqsa complex and other holy sites (extant since at least the seventh century) in Jerusalem, the Palestinians are not likely to do so.

The closure of the West Bank and Gaza has had a negative impact on the development of democratic process as well. Although Palestinians are supposedly "self-ruling," 70 percent of the West Bank remains under Israeli military occupation. The newly elected, 88-member Palestinian Legislative Council lives scattered across the area and must cross Israeli-controlled borders in order to meet.

"We can only meet with Israeli permission," Dr. Raji Sourani, director of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, told the MCC delegation. "With the closure, they [the council] cannot meet. In the past six months, they have only met 24 times.

"The legislative council cannot change Israeli military orders [or] legislate in opposition to Israeli orders," Sourani added. "Is this democracy?"

"Jerusalem is, and has been for centuries, the political, religious, economic and social hub of Palestinian life," says Patty.

So when North Americans wonder why such a storm erupted over the "simple opening of an archaeological tunnel," they must realize it was merely the tinder waiting to ignite long-smoldering coals into flame, she says.

"All three religions—Islam, Judaism, Christianity—in Jerusalem have a strong sense of the status quo and which holy sites are in whose hands," she explains. "The tunnel connects the Western Wall [the only part of the Second Temple compound, which was almost completely destroyed in 70 A.D., still standing] to the Via Dolorosa [considered by Christians to be the way Jesus walked to Calvary], and it goes right along the edge and underneath the supporting walls of the plaza at the Al-Aqsa site. It was secretly excavated years ago but then sealed off.

"The Palestinians see the opening of the tunnel as the Israelis exerting their claim to the predominantly Muslim and Arab Christian areas of Jerusalem. They see it as encroachment into a Muslim holy site, that eventually the Israelis will want to allow Jews to worship and build a synagogue in the Al-Aqsa complex."

Palestinians have watched in frustration in recent years as the Israelis have gradually moved in on the mosque in Hebron, also dating from the seventh century, said to be over the tomb of Abraham and Sarah, who are considered patriarchs by all three religions. Jews as well as Muslims can now pray at that site. In Hebron, in February 1994, an Israeli settler, Baruch Goldstein opened fire on praying Muslims, killing 29.

"The government of [Israeli prime minister] Benjamin Netanyahu has taken some assertive steps to lay claim to exclusive control of Jerusalem," says Patty. "The tunnel opening was the most blatant so far."

Since the opening of the tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem in September, thousands of Jewish tourists have walked through it.

The fighting that broke out soon after the opening has directly affected Mennonite partners in West Bank and Gaza and raised new challenges for Mennonites living and working there.

Gun battles: At Bethlehem Bible College, an MCC-supported institution, a bullet came through the library window on Sept. 26 from gun battles going on in the street in front of the building. "It was a miracle no one inside was hurt," said college president Bishara Awad.

Zoughbi Zoughbi, director of an MCC-supported conflict resolution center in Bethlehem, took wounded people to the hospital in his vehicle. Restricted movement, enforced by Israeli tanks, soldiers and extra checkpoints, meant MCC staff were temporarily unable to get to the MCC office in East Jerusalem. Shortages of medicine, food and gasoline have meant heightened tension as well.

One Mennonite response was partic-

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

'A miracle no one was hurt': *Zoughbi Zoughbi took wounded people in his vehicle to the hospital.*

ipation in a prayer service organized on Sept. 29 by West Bank Christians. MCC volunteers were among 800 people who prayed and sang together, then lit candles and walked silently along the Via Dolorosa from St. Anne's Church to the Second Station of the Cross, the Church of the Flagellation, near where the disputed tunnel opens onto the road. Armed Israeli Defense Force soldiers and Israeli border police with wooden clubs lined the route.

Naim Ateek, Canon of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem, pointed out in comments following the service that the statement church leaders had prepared held a message for the Muslim and Christian communities as well as the Israelis. (See excerpts at right.)

"The message for the Christian community is that we, the leaders and the church, are not silent," he said. "We can take initiative. We do have a voice. The message for Muslims is that we are all Palestinians—Christians and Muslims. The Muslim community does not stand alone. Every part of the community will do its share in standing for what is right."

"This is definitely a broader Palestinian issue," says Patty. "To me, that was what made the prayer service important and comforting. The Christians in Jerusalem are clearly united on this point. Sometimes the community seems fractured, but not on this."

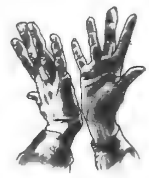
Another Mennonite response was to answer an urgent appeal from the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization network for people from outside the region to come in and observe the situation.

MCC sent a delegation composed of MCC Washington office director J. Daryl Byler, MCC Ottawa office director Bill Janzen, MCC Middle East program director Ed Epp, Patty and MCC peace development worker Carmen Pauls. The group spent several days in October traveling in the area to meet with MCC friends and partners there and listen to their perspectives.

Eighty-six-year-old Father Ibrahim Ayyad, a Latin Catholic priest, did not mince words. "With all due respect to my American friends, egoistic and selfish interests drive the U.S. policy in this region, not concern for human rights or working for peace," he told the delegation. "The United States defends human rights in selective ways."

Dr. Haider Abdel Shaafi, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said, "We Palestinians are frustrated to see the

'PEACE must be based on justice'



Excerpts from a statement of the patriarchs, bishops, clergy and people of the Christian churches of Jerusalem

We cry out to God to have mercy on all of us, and to grant wisdom to the leaders of all the peoples of his land so that they might make the right decisions that will put an end to bloodshed and lead us to a just peace.

As we lift our voices in prayer, we wish to emphasize three principles that spring from the core of our faith in God and grow out of the experience of the Christian church in this country for the past 2,000 years.

Peace and security in our country cannot prevail unless they are established on justice. We believe that God is the God of justice and righteousness. God does not accept oppression but calls on all of us as members of one human family, Arabs and Jews, to make justice and to love righteousness. God does not accept the domination of the powerful or their arrogance. We urgently call on the Israeli government to pursue the peace process with all seriousness and to carry out all its obligations to our people. … We urge the Israeli government to change its attitude and purify its motives. Peace cannot be imposed by the power of arms. Brutality will not lead to security. Stability cannot be established by way of injustice and the denial of rights. Justice must come first, and then peace will follow; a peace that will lead to security. We as Christians feel that the Israeli government's formula for peace is flawed. Its slogan is "security first and then peace." Such a formula casts justice aside and will never bring peace. As the prophet Isaiah has said, "The effect of justice will be peace and the result of justice, quietness and security forever" (Isaiah 32:17).

Our faith teaches us that there is no difference between the life of one person and another. … We call on the Israeli government to bring all its discriminatory policies to an end. Palestinians should have rights in their country, just as Jews have rights in their country. … We urge the Israeli government to abstain from the confiscation of land, to return confiscated land to its rightful owners, to stop the demolition of homes, to release all prisoners and detainees, to remove roadblocks and to respect all signed agreements. We call upon the Israeli government to close the recently opened tunnel, to refrain from causing insult and humiliation to the Palestinian people, and treat the Palestinians as genuine partners, who are seeking a life of freedom and dignity in their own country and on their own land. Racial discrimination does not lead to peace and security. …

The opening of the tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem was only the straw that broke the camel's back. … For our Muslim brothers and sisters, the opening of the tunnel is a prelude to the opening of other tunnels which will inevitably lead to breaking into the compound of the Mosque and the occupation of part of it. Further archeological claims near the tunnel might also affect Christian sites and restrict pilgrims in the area. …

When the closure of Jerusalem is lifted and the two parties share sovereignty over it, Jerusalem will become the city of peace. If Israel maintains an exclusive sovereignty over the city and continues its "judaization," Jerusalem will never be the city of peace. …

We call on all authorities concerned to end the violence, to work for the establishment of justice so that stability might be realized. We ask God to fill our hearts and minds with love, strength, and all that is good, so that our region, our country and our Jerusalem will have the peace for which we all strive and pray.

"The Israeli position is in essence a call for violence from Palestinians who have been dehumanized and humiliated for 30 years."

Dr. Haider Abdel Shaafi

world deal in double standards. It is appalling that people in Europe and North America are still not aware of the facts of the situation here."

Shaafi told the delegation, "We expect that you will tell people the truth about what is going on here." He called for "a balanced third party" to participate in the ongoing peace negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian governments, one that would hold Israel accountable to international law and United Nations resolutions.

"Peace [must be more than] rhetoric used by politicians," said Sourani. "If the people do not enjoy justice and fairness, clearly this is not peace. Hungry, open mouths cannot accept political rhetoric."

Peace is in essence clinically dead, he said.

Shaafi added, "In the face of existing realities, Palestinians are not ready to accept anything less than our rights. According to the principles of law and human rights, what we are seeing on the side of Israel is illegal. Israelis do not need to deny the Palestinian people's rights. ... The welfare and security of Israel and the future of Jewish generations can only be guaranteed by a solid and firm peace."

All the political and religious leaders the delegation met predicted, without exception, more violence in the near future if underlying issues are not addressed. Shaafi said, "The Israeli position is in essence a call for violence from Palestinians who have been dehumanized and humiliated for 30 years. The violence [in late September] sent a necessary message to the world at great cost. We do not want more violence and bloodshed. I cannot understand why the world says nothing in the face of Israeli violations of international law."

Father Manuel Musallem, long-time MCC partner and director of the Latin Partriarchate school in Gaza City, said the "peace" brought by the current peace process must be distinguished from the peace with justice needed to restore stability in the region. Israel's delay in implementing key aspects of the signed agreements and the failure to address long-standing grievances of the Palestinians is unacceptable, he said.

"People are afraid," he told the delegation. "When you see [Israeli] tanks surrounding the city, what can you say? That this is peace? Some 1,500 people were injured in Gaza alone. This was not a 'clash.' This was a war."

Lost in the wilderness: The peace process, begun in good faith with much hope, has meant stark disappointment and great cost in terms of human life. "We have the story in the Bible of the people crossing the Red Sea," said Father Musallem. "Let us say the the people are us, the Palestinians. We are living here but we have not reached the Holy Land. Until now, we are lost in the wilderness, wandering. To enter this land is really to have peace, to love and be loved.

"Our people know only suffering. Our children need to be taught the way of peace. Peace is not the absence of war. Peace is the opportunity for education, life, joy and development."

Their experience and contacts in West Bank and Gaza left the MCC delegation struggling to know how to respond and what message to take back to their constituents.

"We have been blinded for wanting," says Patty. "In the West, we wanted to believe that peace was coming with handshakes and the signing of agreements. We have allowed ourselves to feel relief that 'peace has finally come to the Middle East.' But that is not the reality.

"Jeremiah's words may well describe our response," she says, referring to Jeremiah 6:14: "They have healed the wounds of my people lightly by saying, 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace."

"The situation is much more difficult than I expected," says Bill Janzen. "The closure creates economic hardship that is much worse than under the official Israeli military occupation.

"We talk about the violent clashes and 'future violence' that may erupt," he adds, "but the violence that never makes the headlines is the long-standing brutality and economic hardship caused by the closure and continued military occupation."

The delegation members confessed their complicity as citizens of the United States and Canada in the tragedy they witnessed in West Bank and Gaza. It was clear to them that U.S. tax

"People are afraid. When you see [Israeli] tanks surrounding the city, what can you say? That this is peace? Some 1,500 people were injured in Gaza alone. This was not a 'clash.' This was a war."

Father Manuel Musallem

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

> ***"We talk about the violent clashes and 'future violence' that may erupt, but the violence that never makes the headlines is the long-standing brutality and economic hardship caused by the closure and continued military occupation."***
>
> **Bill Janzen**

dollars supported the Israeli military policies choking all aspects of Palestinian life and that election-year politics are affecting U.S. participation in current peace negotiations.

The delegation members agreed on the importance of raising awareness of the current situation in West Bank and Gaza, continuing to recognize, understand and confess the role North Americans have played in the suffering and strengthening efforts to stand in solidarity with local Christians and partners.

Perhaps most important, says Patty, echoing Dr. Haider Abdel Shaafi, is "telling the truth about what we have seen and heard."

"What we've seen in [North American] media doesn't tell the truth about what the Palestinians are experiencing and how the peace process looks and feels to them," she says. "We're trying to find ways to tell the truth."

MCC volunteers will continue to do their work in the Middle Eastern context, she says, to be in touch with partners, work on projects and especially to be present to listen to what people are saying.

"What's clear, what we're hearing," she says, "is that the underlying causes and factors that built the tinderbox, which was then ignited by the tunnel opening, are still there. There's no sign of movement, even with the continuing negotiations. The mood is very pessimistic.

"For now, it's relatively calm," she says, "because Palestinians are infinitely patient and are willing to give everything and anything a chance to create real peace.

"The anguish of Jeremiah should be our anguish. Those promoting peace are taking the wounds far too lightly. One of the people the delegation talked to described the Palestinian people as being like paper being pressed and crushed to the point of disintegration. 'We've given as much as we can give, and still remain paper,' he said.

"Unless there are some real changes, I suspect we'll spend a lot more time weeping for Jerusalem."

Melanie A. Zuercher is assistant editor of The Mennonite.

A Litany for peace in Jerusalem

The worship leader or a member of the congregation who has visited Israel/Palestine may choose to share words of introduction regarding the recent violence in the West Bank.

Leader: Let us recognize the pain of the Christians in Jerusalem who have walked the way of the cross.

People: Our brothers and sisters in Jerusalem have experienced pain and bitterness as they lived through the violence that has shaken Jerusalem and the whole of their country, events that led to the death of scores of people and the wounding of hundreds.

Leader: Let us affirm God's presence with the Christians of Jerusalem.

People: We believe that God is the God of justice and righteousness. God does not accept oppression, but calls on all of us as members of one human family to make justice and to love righteousness.

Leader: Let us join in the prayer of the people of Jerusalem:

People: We cry out to God to have mercy on all of us, and to grant wisdom to Israeli and Palestinian leaders so that they may make the right decisions that will put an end to bloodshed and lead us to a just peace.

Leader: As the prophet Isaiah has said, "The effect of justice will be peace and the result of justice, quietness and security forever" (Isaiah 32:17).

All: We ask God to fill our hearts and minds with love, strength and all that is good so that our region, our country and our Jerusalem will have the peace for which we all strive and pray.

This litany may be followed by time for spoken or silent prayers by members of the congregation. Members of the congregation may choose to light a candle in remembrance of sisters and brothers in Jerusalem. Close the prayer time with congregational singing. Suggested hymns would be: "For the healing of the nations" (Hymnal: A Worship Book 367), *"Thou true vine, that heals"* (HWB 373) *and "I bind my heart this tide"* (HWB 411).

Compiled by Carmen Pauls, Mennonite Central Committee West Bank

Deceptive signs of PEACE

Wendy Lehman

The main focus of peace talks between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has been the redeployment (removal) of Israeli occupation forces from Hebron. However, even if Netanyahu says he will implement the redeployment agreement that former Prime Minister Shimon Peres signed with Arafat, the situation will probably not improve much for the 120,000 Palestinians living in Hebron. Many Hebronites have said there can be no real peace without the evacuation of the Israeli settlers from the city center.

> ***Hebronites worry because removing troops there does not equal peace.***

According to the Peres-Arafat agreement under the Oslo II accords, almost 20 percent of the city will remain under direct Israeli control—namely, in the area of the Israeli settlements. At least 30,000 Palestinians live in these Israeli-controlled areas, and some estimates say as high as 50,000.

Four hundred Israeli settlers, known as extreme and right-wing even when compared with settlers elsewhere in the West Bank, live in the old city. Regular abuses and violence committed by the settlers against Palestinians often go unpunished by the Israeli authorities.

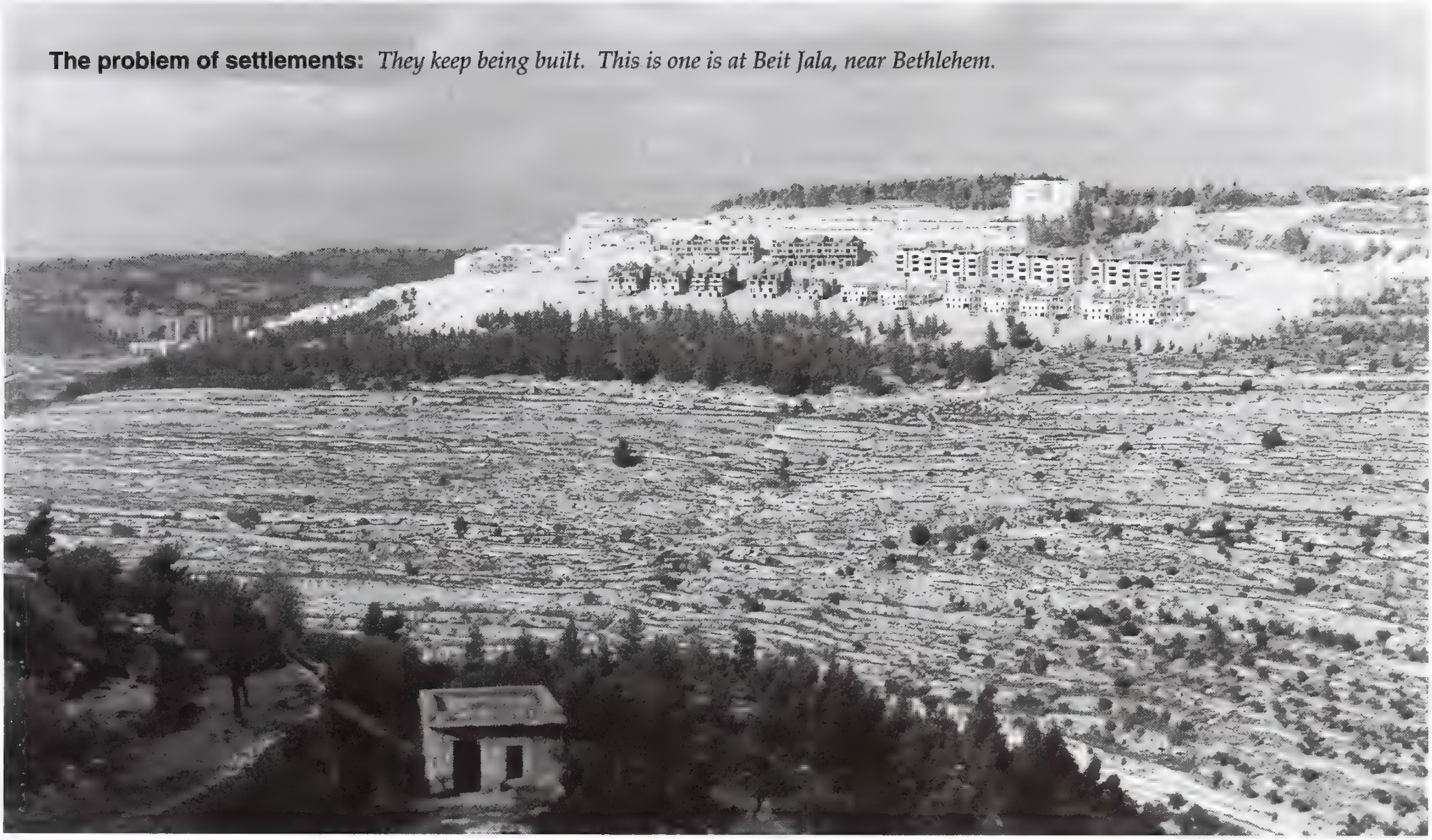
Some 17 Israeli military checkpoints, in place due only to the presence of the settlers, make transportation in this area virtually impossible for the Palestinian residents here. In addition, the old city divides the northern part of the city from the southern areas.

Deboyya Street, formerly the main economic thoroughfare of the city,

Only a slight improvement: *Potters at work in Hebron*

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

"The people here are like a volcano—they are ready to explode."



The problem of settlements: *They keep being built. This is one is at Beit Jala, near Bethlehem.*

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

passes through the old city and has been closed since February 1994, when Israeli settler Baruch Goldstein massacred 29 Palestinians as they prayed. Most of the shops along this road have been closed.

According to one local community organizer and activist, almost all the city's problems occur in the areas that will not be redeployed. Maybe 10 percent of difficulties occur elsewhere in the city, so redeployment will only bring a slight improvement, he says.

At least one Palestinian resident almost hopes redeployment does not occur. Motaz Al-Jabery, the head of the computer department at Hebron University, says he fears that if this partial redeployment takes place, "the international community will forget about Hebron and assume its problems are finished."

Nasser Atullah, a social worker with Defense for Children International, works in the northern part of the city. "First," he says, "let me say that the Palestinian Authority is better than the Israeli authority." But he adds that "with or without redeployment, the problems in the old city will be the same and maybe even worse," because it may be more difficult to travel from Palestinian-controlled areas to those under the control of the Israeli occupation authorities. "If you speak about Hebron, you must speak about the settlers."

One of the "Temporary International Presence in Hebron" observers echoes this response. When asked if he thinks the Peres-Arafat agreement on redeployment will improve the situation, he also says he cannot see a viable peace in Hebron without removing the settlers from the city center.

Atullah, and many others in Hebron, are not even convinced partial redeployment will happen in the city under Netanyahu's government.

Even so, right now Hebronites are holding their breath, waiting to see what comes of the talks. No one is predicting a continuation of "intifada"-like clashes, but one resident said, "The people here are like a volcano—they are ready to explode."

Wendy Lehman, from Kidron, Ohio, is a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams in Hebron.

Letters

REFRESHED HER SPIRIT

Thank you for your Sept. 24 issue on Christian education. Rosella Regier's article ("A Jubilee Journey," page 3) refreshed my spirit. It would be lovely to hear an expanded account of her reflections as a Christian educator. *Sue Schumacher Cook, Toledo, Ohio*

TV NEWS OPTIONS

We continue to appreciate the articles and information in *The Mennonite*.

I was puzzled when I read your Oct. 8 editorial in which you implied that if you don't have cable TV you don't have access to TV news that allows the time needed to explore the various aspects of an event. We also don't subscribe to cable but feel the "Jim Lehrer Newshour" on PBS does an excellent job of just that. *Lois Bartel, La Junta, Colo.*

TO VOTE OR NOT TO VOTE

In the Oct. 8 issue you ran an article by J. Daryl Byler you described as a look "at what the Bible says about voting" ("Voting Rights, Voting Wrong," page 10). Having read the article, I am confused as to what the Bible says about voting. The author states, "There is no biblical precedent of voting," then goes on to say in the next paragraph, "if we are to vote. ..." This is not a self-evident transition, and I was left wanting explanation the article didn't provide.

I was also confused on how God's "choice" of David can be seen as God's "vote" for David. These words are not synonyms, given the issue discussed.

"We are wrong to view voting as a power move to promote our interests alone." Voting and "empowerment" are frequently connected in public debate concerning liminal groups. Voting in the United States carries legislative weight, results of which are powerfully enforced. If voting is not a power move, I would be interested to hear another position.

What does the closing paragraph say? Do the first and second sentences lay out different political approaches? If they do, maybe the last paragraph should have been the lead and the article could have examined the breadth of political behavior of people who wish to "advocate God's way of peace and justice." Some by voting and some by not voting. *Matt Wiebe via Internet*

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Thanks for the Commentary from Rich Preheim in the Oct. 8 issue ("Identity and Mission," page 11). Preheim clearly identified a major dilemma we have as we attempt to spread the gospel. When Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers are asked why they are volunteering their time, it is important that the response be a clear articulation of our faith. I hope for the day that any member of a Mennonite congregation can confidently and easily respond with an answer that is Christ-centered.

This commentary is timely because of work being done by the Commission on Home Ministries and the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries exactly on this point. A new evangelism and church growth initiative being sponsored by both boards hopes to develop a theologically sound and comfortable "concise reference." We envision a simple and forthright formulation of our Anabaptist faith that any member can use in answering such questions. After all, it is only as we are able to explain to an inquirer why we do what we do that an inquirer will be able to hear the good news of Jesus Christ from us. *Everett J. Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Elkhart, Ind.*

REJECTED BY THE CHURCH

In reference to the article on pacifism by Walfried Goossen (July 9 issue, page 11) and the subsequent letters (Aug. 13 issue, page 10) I am glad that Duane Schrag has never encountered the pain of rejection by the Mennonite church. Not all of us have been so fortunate.

One World War II veteran that I know of relates the story of coming home from battle and being informed that he was no longer a member of the church where he had grown up. This so embittered him that he quit going to church altogether for many years.

A similar, more recent incident occurred when a young man, who is a deputy with the local sheriff's department, was told he and his family were no longer welcome in his church because as a law officer he is required to carry a gun.

I am an active duty nurse currently serving with the U.S. Air Force. When I was transferred to Alaska, my family and I began attending the Mennonite church here in Anchorage.

I remember listening, on the verge of tears, as one group of visiting Canadian Mennonites proudly proclaimed that soldiers returning from World War II were most definitely not allowed to remain members in their church.

My family and I continued to attend the Mennonite church here even after they adopted a membership covenant that excluded anyone in the military, but over the next few months we felt increasingly uncomfortable. When the pastor made a special visit to our home to inform us that our 2-year-old daughter was "disrupting" the worship service (there was no nursery available) and that we should discipline her with a "rod" as the Bible instructs (a bit ironic coming from a so-called pacifist) we came to the conclusion that it was time to look for a new church home.

The point I want to make is that just because you have never heard of or experienced something, don't dismiss it as being nonexistent. As to the proper use of the words "often," "most" and "many," I could argue semantics all day. The question is, How often is too often? How many God-fearing Christian military men and women are going to be turned away from Mennonite churches because they don't fit the criteria?

To come home from a foreign country after risking life and limb to defend the liberty of your friends and loved ones and be informed that your church has kicked you out is a slap in the face that I'm sure a lot of veterans have had trouble reconciling even after many years. Grief is an emotion that we all have to work through at one time or another. As my family and I search for a new church home I am in prayer that our deep sense of sadness and loss does not turn to bitterness but that we will see this as a period of spiritual growth. *Debra McMahan, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska*

Learning to pray

Praying with icons

How visual images can help awaken our communion with God

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

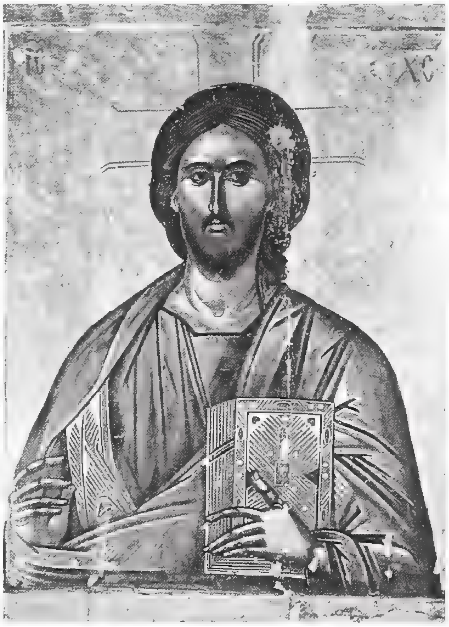
Ever since returning from a trip to Syria last spring, I have been intrigued by icons. One of the most powerful recurring images from the trip is of an elderly woman standing reverently before an icon of Mary at the entrance of a church. As the woman touched Mary's eyes, ears, nose, lips and hands, she touched her own senses in what seemed to be an act of blessing. Later, when I examined the icon more closely, I saw that the paint had worn thin from being touched so often.

I had no doubt that the woman was deeply engaged in prayer. What was less clear to me was how this practice of prayer had developed and what it might offer to Christians from other traditions.

During the past weeks, while mourning the death of Henri Nouwen, beloved spiritual writer and guide for many, I decided to read one of his books I had not yet read, *Behold the Beauty of the Lord: Praying with Icons* (Ave Maria Press, 1987). This book not only introduces the practice of praying with icons but also includes an account of Nouwen's own prayer experiences with four specific icons (color reproductions of the icons are included on fold-out endpapers of the book).

Many Mennonites will be suspicious of practices such as praying with icons. In our emphasis on the spiritual life as an inner reality, we have paid little attention to external stimuli for prayer. Yet I don't know of a Mennonite anywhere who hasn't been awakened to God's presence by the glory of a sunset. We understand how seeing the work of God in nature can call us to prayer. It ought not be such a big leap, then, to understand—theoretically at least—how a visual depiction of a biblical character or scene might also awaken thoughts of God or communion with God.

The visual arena: At one time in the past, both the Western and Eastern Church shared a deep concern for "seeing" as a spiritual discipline. Today the commercial world—from television to billboards to magazine advertising—has taken over the visual arena. Each day our eyes are bombarded with a multitude of images meant to encourage our greed and self-centeredness. Is it any wonder that we find it difficult to pray?



"Christ," Mt. Athos, 15th century

Henri Nouwen, in *Behold the Beauty of the Lord*, observes that icons have particularly aided his prayer in times of distress. He says, "There are many times when I cannot pray, when I am too tired to read the Gospels, too restless to have spiritual thoughts, too depressed to find words for God, or too exhausted to do anything. But I can still look at these images so intimately connected with the experience of love."

An icon (the Greek word for "image") is not an ordinary religious painting. A viewer immediately notices the stylized figures who, though obviously human, are also the dwelling of the Spirit—suggested by the golden nimbus (or halo) and other symbols. Another feature is the use of reverse perspective in which the vanishing point is located behind the viewer rather than in the icon. What happens is that the viewer is drawn into the painting and becomes a participant in the scene.

Artists who paint icons engage in preparatory spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting and contemplation of the Gospels. Their work is a mode of prayer, not primarily a creative endeavor, and is meant to elicit prayer in the viewer. Nouwen explains, "The icon is like a window looking out upon eternity. Behind its two-dimensional surface lies the garden of God. [Icons] draw me into closer communion with the God of love."

In our emphasis on the spiritual life as an inner reality, we have paid little attention to external stimuli for prayer.

By gazing long and lovingly at an icon, a viewer begins to see not only the divine light reflected in human creatures but also begins to apprehend the presence of God that shines throughout all of creation. In other words, one's vision is transformed to be able to see into the heart of reality with compassion and discernment.

Though praying with icons is not likely to become common among Mennonites, we would do well to ponder what we permit our eyes to dwell upon. Perhaps our sisters and brothers in the Eastern Church could instruct us in the spiritual discipline of focusing our sight on the things of God.

Fiscal health

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Use securities for charitable giving

There are advantages for the giver and the recipient.

J.B. Miller

Christmas is just around the corner, and with it the end of 1996. During the holiday season and before the year is out, many people think about giving to their favorite charities. Some are motivated by sheer generosity; others are motivated by generosity and good tax planning.

As people plan their giving, one of the obvious considerations is where the money will come from to make charitable contributions beyond cash from earnings. One of the best places to look is among assets we own that have appreciated in value. Gifts of securities that have appreciated in value since they were purchased are particularly beneficial under current U.S. tax laws.

One option is to sell the appreciated securities, then contribute part or all of the proceeds to a charity. When appreciated assets are sold, capital gains taxes will need to be paid on the gain (appreciation), and a charitable contribution will be realized from the gift to charity. (See example below.)

100 shares of stock purchased on Jan. 4, 1994, for $70 per share: $7,000
Stock now worth $100 per share: $10,000
Gain (appreciation) on stock: $3,000
Tax on gain at 28 percent tax rate: $840
Balance available for charity: $9,160

While any charity would be happy with a donation of $9,160, a better approach in this example would be to give the stock to the charity and receive a charitable contribution receipt for the entire $10,000 market value of the security. Providing you have owned the securities for one year or longer, you will be eligible for a charitable deduction in the amount of $10,000 in this example, not just $9,160. Donating an appreciated asset will eliminate any tax on the capital gains and will allow you to contribute a greater amount to the charity.

Some additional things to remember: Gifts of securities are deductible up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income. Any unused deduction may be carried over for as many as five additional years. Contributing securities you have owned for less than a year will result in a charitable contribution of the cost basis, not the market value.

Some smaller charities are not equipped to accept gifts of securities. Although they might like to, these charities may not be familiar with how to accept and receipt these gifts of securities.

> ***As people plan their giving, one of the obvious considerations is where the money will come from to make charitable contributions beyond cash from earnings.***

While I have attempted not to promote products from my employer through this column, I would be remiss if I did not tell you that you have the option to give the securities to Mennonite Foundation (U.S.). The foundation will then provide you with a charitable receipt, sell the securities and place the proceeds in a charitable gift fund. You, as a donor, then have the opportunity to recommend that these funds be used to benefit a charity or charities of your choice. And the charities won't have to handle any of the paperwork.

The foundation's charitable gift fund has a great deal of flexibility that is particularly beneficial for people who want a large charitable tax deduction in a particular year but may not want to donate all the funds to a specific charity in the same year. All or any portion of the funds can remain in the charitable gift fund until you decide to request the distribution. You have the ability to transfer securities to the foundation this year, receive a charitable contribution receipt the same year and request that a portion of the gift fund be distributed. You can then make decisions about distributing the remaining funds next year when you are not pressured by tax deadlines.

Virtually any asset can be given to the foundation and placed in a charitable gift fund, but securities are particularly attractive because they can so easily be converted to cash. Marketable securities can be given one day and cash is normally available a week or so later. The foundation does have guidelines as to how soon after a gift is made the funds can be distributed to the recommended charity.

Since mutual funds are bought and sold like individual securities, they can also be contributed to charities with similar benefits.

There are certain guidelines that all charities follow when accepting gifts of securities. Be sure to contact the charity before making the gift. This will result in an easy transfer, benefiting both you and the charity.

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

Learning the character of the church

Mary H. Schertz

I flew into the Saskatoon airport at dusk on a Sunday evening. I had left the sultry humidity of Elkhart behind for the slightly less humid air of the prairie provinces. I was there to teach Matthew 18-25 to some of the pastors and lay leaders of Saskatchewan. The gospel texts for the fall lections were to be taken from that section of Matthew and I had been asked to teach a one week class on these texts.

It had been a long day and my mind was more on getting to my destination (i.e. bed) than on the gospel of Matthew that Sunday evening. But as I stepped off the plane and was greeted by Elsie and Delmer Epp, two realities of Canadian life became immediately apparent. First, Canadian hospitality is real and warm. Second, the sunsets are absolutely spectacular. For the rest of the week I tried to take in as much of both as possible.

I soon settled into a rhythm. In the mornings at breakfast I often shared the summer-deserted dining hall with Henry, who had been with the host college for many years and was working on renovations in the dining room. I learned a lot from and about Henry.

Then I would collect my books and head for the morning class sessions. There were two—with a break around the bottomless coffee pot between them. Afternoons were filled with class preparation and lots of good, long walks around Saskatoon. Several afternoons I walked to the edge of town and out onto the prairie; other afternoons I headed for the shops and other charms of downtown Saskatoon. Of course, I also enjoyed eating lunch with members of the class and the evening invitations to homes. A special event of the week was seeing a performance of *The Miracle Worker* directed by Vickie Dyck and performed at her barn theatre outside Saskatoon.

J. Tyler Klassen

So by now what you are thinking is that a seminary teacher leaves the familiar classrooms of AMBS and heads off for exotic destinations in order to have a good time. Well, that's certainly part of it. But there is a more serious side to it as well. There is, I have found, no way to really gain insight into what pastors, lay leaders and members of congregations are thinking, saying and asking unless a professor visits people in their own setting and takes part, however briefly, in life as they experience it. The classroom discussions off-campus are different than those on campus. Conference and regional issues come to the fore.

One gains a sense of the flavor of a particular setting as the pastors and other leaders share stories about their congregations and the joy and struggle of serving them. One learns that the issues of the church in Canada are sometimes the same but many times different from the issues of the church in the U.S. But most important, one learns that the church across the world is not an abstraction. Each arena of the church's work and mission in the world has its own faces, names, personalities, scenery and character.

Now, when people mention Saskatoon, or Saskatchewan, or the prairie provinces or the church in Canada—while my knowledge is not great, I nevertheless carry in my mind and heart images of the spirit of those places and those peoples. And that is the legacy of my week in Saskatoon.

Mary H. Schertz is associate professor of New Testament at AMBS.

Inside

Bringing seminary resources to conferences and congregations

What happens when seminary education comes to us

On the road with AMBS faculty

Bringing seminary resources to conferences and congregations

"Multiplying resources" is the way Ralph Lebold describes the efforts of conferences and seminaries working together at pastoral ministry training.

It is difficult for many pastors and lay leaders to come to the academic centers where ministry training is available. "It's a big area," Ralph says, referring to Canada and the U.S. So he, as director of external programs at AMBS, works to make the seminary more available to people throughout the church.

Each of the programs with which Ralph works fills a need in pastoral training. Each builds on the cooperation of conferences and Mennonite seminaries to make pastoral training and theological education accessible not just in Harrisonburg, Va.; Elkhart, Ind., and Winnipeg Man., but across North America.

CBTE

In the **Conference-based Theological Education** program, five centers and seven other programs in Canada and the U.S. offer graduate-level theological education and biblical studies. These are programs organized and planned by conferences with the assistance of the seminaries.

PSDE

Pastoral Studies Distance Education is also designed to make ministry training available to people who cannot leave their work to study at a seminary.

This program is particularly helpful when people are called out of their congregations to be pastors without formal preparation for that role. Deacons and other lay leaders are also participating in the program.

Currently PSDE offers a college-level course called "Leading God's People." It involves individual study and reflection like a correspondence course; however, it also includes involvement with the instructor for each unit and with a mentor in the student's geographical area.

Graduate-level courses for PSDE are being developed. These will add the ingredient of communication via computer to increase the interaction among students and between student and instructor.

Urban Leaders Development

The Urban Leaders Development Program is a new effort underway in Chicago. To help meet the leadership training needs of urban Chicago pastors, Ralph is helping to coordinate resources already available in the area. As a shared effort among AMBS, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Board of Education, this program can become a model for leadership development in other urban areas.

New ventures

Providing seminary resources for people whose first language is not English is an emerging need. Because of Ralph's work in helping bring pastoral training to many across North America, he has had contacts from groups such as Laotians, Hmong and Chinese. "We need to make a conscious effort to help these groups train their leaders," Ralph says.

With 20 years of experience in coordinating these varied programs which combine conference, congregation and seminary resources, Ralph concludes, "If you're going to be faithful to what the church is about, you try to make something happen."

On the road with AMBS faculty

Faculty members travel the continent, teaching and preaching. . .some even travel the globe. Here's a sampling from the 1995-96 school year.

Jacob Elias: *Bible teaching and preaching in Reedley, Calif.; preached at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man.; led prayer week services in Leamington, Ont.*

Gayle Gerber Koontz: *resource person for the Western District women's retreat; preached at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.*

Ted Koontz: *gave keynote address at conference on church related institutions held at Elizabethtown College*

Marlene Kropf: *spoke at Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions in Calgary, Alb.; presented weekend services at Bethel Mennonite Church, Mt. Lake, Minn.; gave keynote address at Worship Symposium at Bethel College, N. Newton, Kan.*

Ben Ollenburger: *taught Isaiah four Sundays at the Howard-Miami Mennonite Church near Kokomo, Ind.; preached in Souderton, Pa. Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, and Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart.*

(Continued on column four of next page)

When Rev. Woodie White, president of the international United Methodist Council of Bishops, visited AMBS in September, he stood on "common ground."

In his chapel message, he said, "Every now and then we must step back from our particularities—political opinion, social standing, race, gender, theological perspective—and see that common ground which binds us together. We who are Christians claim that unique common ground, the One we call Lord and Master."

United Methodist students make up roughly thirteen percent of the seminary student body; some commute more than 100 miles to attend once-a-week classes. AMBS is approved by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church as a seminary for United Methodist pastoral training.

In addition to speaking in chapel, Bishop White met with Methodist students like Jo An Schaetzle (center), and with faculty members, including Mary K. Oyer (left). *Photo by Gordon Janzen*

Three participants speak:

What happens when seminary education comes to us

I found the first unit of the Pastoral Studies Distance Education course to be of considerable value personally, and also in my role as halftime pastor. Answering the questions resulted in new insight and healing, and I felt guided through scripture and by the Holy Spirit in personal decisions I needed to make.

Dialogue with a congregational response group and discussion with my mentor helped me determine priorities in ministerial tasks and also helped me develop a vision for the small rural congregation which I serve.

In a nutshell, I gained an understanding of myself as a child of God, and also clarity as to the role of leadership in the church as it applies in my situation.

Eileen Wiebe
Pastor, Superb Mennonite Church, Kerrobert, Saskatchewan

A number of pastors in our area have not completed seminary or are relatively new to the Mennonite church. The workshops and classes offered by our Theological Education Committee allow pastors to supplement training and education through events that are more accessible than those on the campus of an Anabaptist/Mennonite institution. Schools in our region offer courses but we also want our pastors to have training opportunities in the context of our unique tradition. Our events provide continuing education close to home that is rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite heritage.

Teresa Moser McDermid
Pastor, Sunrise Mennonite Church, Clackamas, Oregon
Chairperson, Theological Education Committee, Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference (a CBTE program)

"Not all seminary education happens on campus," Erick Sawatzky said at a recent AMBS forum. "Not all of what is needed in preparation for ministry takes place in the library and classrooms."

As director of field services, he was introducing three students who spent their summer doing internships: Tonya Ramer, chaplain intern in Ft. Wayne, Ind.; Gordon Janzen, chaplain intern in South Bend, Ind., and Maribeth Longacre, pastoral intern in Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church. *Photo by Mary E. Klassen*

With more than 20 children under age six living on the campus, and a similar number enrolled in the AMBS Cooperative Childcare program, the children's chapel service on Sept. 13 involved a host of lively participants listening to a story read by AMBS student Brian Burkholder.
Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Great Plains Seminary Education Program offers graduate level studies to 70 congregations in a thirty-mile radius of Newton, Kan. Classes one night a week make it possible for many people to take a course each semester fully certified at AMBS.

Great Plains appeals to a wide range of people interested in personal growth and intellectual challenge. For many, this leads to study and a degree at AMBS. Several pastors now serving in this area began study with the Great Plains program.

Our Semester in Kansas program brings a teacher or church leader to the seven-state area comprised by the South Central Conference and Western District Conference. The person teaches a course and preaches or teaches in churches and also leads weekend and midweek teaching sessions. Mary Oyer from AMBS and David Schroeder from Winnipeg, Man., have ministered effectively through this program.

Jacob Friesen, director of Great Plains Seminary Education Program (A CBTE center)

On the road

(Continued from page 2)

Mary Oyer: *on leave in Japan, Taiwan and Japan fall semester 1995. Active in the U.S. and Canada introducing hymns and speaking about African music.*
Walter Sawatsky: *presented several lectures at the Appeal of Conscience Foundation's annual seminar on religion for the U.S. State Department foreign service workers.*
Erick Sawatzky: *preached in Kansas and Indiana.*
Mary Schertz: *preached ten times including an ordination; led Bible study for Women's group; taught at Goshen Bible Institute; taught in Saskatoon, Sask.*
Daniel Schipani: *taught in Texas, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, and Argentina; participated in Menno Simons Symposium in the Netherlands.*
Marcus Smucker: *led a spirituality retreat; consultant and retreat leader for Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee in Central America.*
Willard Swartley: *preached/taught at Prairie Street, Lombard (Ill.) , Cedar Falls (Iowa), East Goshen and Maple City Chapel (Goshen, Ind.) Mennonite Churches; Bible teacher for Commission on Overseas Mission/Mennonite Board of Missions seminar-retreat.*
June Alliman Yoder: *made 32 presentations: Kansas, Iowa, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Virginia, Manitoba*
Perry Yoder: *led a Pastors' Week workshop on the use of the computer in Bible Study; taught Job at the Goshen (Ind.) Bible Institute.*

President's Window

In Mark 8 there is the story of Jesus healing a blind man in a rather odd way. He touches his eyes once and the blind man sees, but not clearly. He sees people like trees walking. Then after Jesus' second touch he sees all things clearly.

Theological education in the Mennonite church is a bit like this. It needs two touches to be 20/20. Some students do most of their preparation for pastoral leadership on campus. They enjoy the rich delights of faculty and campus life, but they don't see clearly until they have also done supervised field education in the congregation, off-campus.

Some students begin their work "out there," in Conference-based Theological Education courses or Pastoral Studies Distance Education. They are already at work in the church and pastoral training happens in an action-reflection mode. These students also need the strengths that a campus-based program offers: faculty, library resources, time for in-depth study, multicultural classroom experiences.

Last May the AMBS board and faculty met to discuss what we called "non-traditional" theological education. Many of the programs we talked about are described in this issue of *AMBS Window*. Through Ralph Lebold's excellent efforts we can say that now more than seventy percent of Mennonites in North America have access to theological education within commuting distance.

Both Eastern Mennonite Seminary and AMBS are offering courses by electronic mail this year. This, with other "seminary without walls" opportunities, makes pastoral training for ministerial leadership more accessible than ever before.

It's important to note also the short-term study options during the summer and interterm at AMBS. Next summer the second annual Evangelism and Mission Institute will meet in Winnipeg, Man., for two sessions, then at AMBS for a third session.

With this varied menu for theological education available, it becomes harder to excuse oneself for not preparing to see clearly in the gift and task of ministerial leadership. And what is the goal? To "understand God more truly"and lead God's people in knowledge and love, to be and do the mission of the kingdom of God for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Willard M. Swartley, Acting President

Spring weekend intensive course:

Systematic Theology in Believers Church Perspective

Instructor: Tom Finger, Ph.D.
Professor of Systematic and Spiritual Theology
at Eastern Mennonite Seminary

Meets four weekends during spring semester:
Feb. 21-22, March 21-22, April 18-19, May 9-10

For information, call the AMBS registrar.

AMBS Panorama

Course offered by e-mail

AMBS is offering the course, Eastern Christianity, by e-mail during second semester, as an experiment to test this method of instruction. The course will be offered simultaneously on campus and to e-mail registrants, with the hope that a small cluster of students from around the world will contribute to the discussion in the on-campus course as well as among themselves.

Walter Sawatsky, AMBS associate professor of church history and mission and director of the Mission Training Center, is the instructor.

For information about registering for the course, consult the AMBS web site: http://members. aol.com/MennoSem/home.htm, or the registrar.

Summer School

During the months of June and August, AMBS will offer thirteen summer school courses, including courses on Corinthians, Ezekiel, Spirituality and pastoral counseling, history of Christian spirituality, ethics for church institutions, congregational administration, practices of faith and science. Instructors include Millard Link, Peter Erb, John Paul Lederach, Del Glick, and Juan and Moira Rogers in addition to AMBS faculty. For more information, contact the AMBS registrar.

Summer Evangelism and Mission Institute

In summer 1997, the second annual Evangelism and Mission Institute will meet first on the campus of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man., for two sessions, July 8-25; then on the AMBS campus for a third session, August 4-15.

Courses offered will include biblical foundations of mission, gospel and western culture, evangelism and early Christianity, new religious movements, evangelism vision and planning for the local congregation. For more information, contact the AMBS registrar.

Advent resources on the web site

AMBS Bible faculty have provided commentaries on the advent lectionary readings. These may be helpful to pastors and worship leaders in planning advent worship services. Find the resources at the AMBS web site: http://members. aol.com/MennoSem/home.htm.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

Fall 1996 *Printed in U.S.A.*

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
Telephone 219 295-3726

News

● ● ● ▼

Integration Committee proposes models

Chicago—Meeting here Oct. 11-12, the Integration Committee (IC) agreed on conceptual models for a new denominational structure. This marked the IC's fourth meeting, including a July 30 conference call.

The General Boards (GBs) of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) will look at the proposed models at their joint meetings Nov. 14-15. The GB of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) will consider the proposals Nov. 22-23.

The IC will send four other items to the GBs for their consideration: (1) a list of goals and strategies for implementing integration; (2) a denominational function chart; (3) a polity statement; (4) counsel regarding a name.

After much discussion and consideration of various models, IC members agreed to a conceptual model that shows the importance of congregations and conferences to the life of a denomination (see illustration). Within a large circle representing congregations is a smaller one representing the area conferences that congregations have organized in order to maximize their mission. Within those circles is a circle divided into parts, to represent the relatively smaller structure of the denomination, which is designed to help congregations and area conferences in their witness.

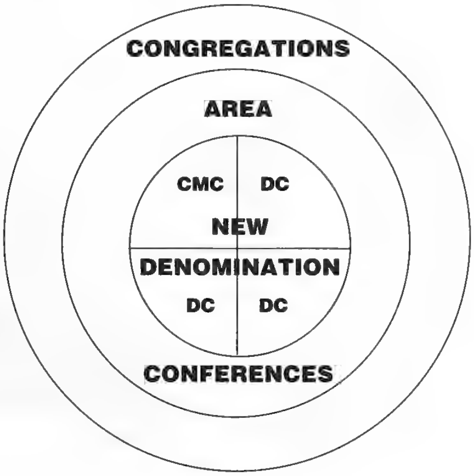
A key element in this model is the inclusion of "denominational centers," set in several regions. Each center is like a doorway through which congregations and conferences can access the resources of the new denomination. The model assumes a minimum of four "centers"—Winnipeg (CMC office); Elkhart, Ind. (MC office); Newton, Kan. (GC office); and one in the Eastern United States—though more could be added.

The IC agreed that up to now the integration discussion had focused on a piecemeal approach, and members wanted to look at the big picture. They also noted that the Canada-U.S. paradigm was becoming dominant. While doing business through a countrywide conference seems to work in Canada, the U.S. members agreed, the U.S. context is different.

Ruth Suter, San Francisco, provided one example. "MMA [Mennonite Mutual Aid] is not as active in the [western United States] as it is elsewhere," she said. "We're more like Canadians [in relationship to MMA]."

With the model the IC proposed goals and strategies. A new structure, among other things, should keep congregations close to denominational resources. Behind this is the idea of self-determination. Congregations and area conferences determine their own preference in relationships.

At the same time, the committee cautioned itself not to romanticize congregations, since they at times need to be called to faithfulness.



DC = DENOMINATIONAL CENTER

The name: IC members noted responses to the name Mennonite Church North America and expressed hesitations with tying the name to geography. They decided not to propose a new name until their next meeting.

In its model of governance, the IC decided to propose having a General Board whose primary responsibilities would include policy, vision and assembly planning, though aspects of these might be shared by area conferences and congregations.

More than once the question arose, How large should this board be? Should it represent all the area conferences and associate groups, like the

Inside the news

Women's groups continue work of integration / p. 15

Integration dominates GC board meetings / p. 16

MCC boards process changes / p. 17

Larry Miller, executive secretary of Mennonite World Conference, was unanimously elected to serve a second six-year term following India 1997, the next MWC gathering.

● ● ●

The third annual conflict report by Project Ploughshares, a Canadian arms monitoring group, describes 44 major armed conflicts in 39 countries in 1995, the same number as in 1994. Eighty percent used child soldiers. No major conflict was between states; all were internal. The 28-page report is available from Project Ploughshares, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6; (519) 888-6541. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

● ● ●

A front-page headline in the Sept. 7 *Winnipeg Free Press* stated: "Poet sneers at Altona printer's attitude." Award-winning Canadian poet Joe Rosenblatt was upset with Friesens Corporation, one of Canada's largest printers and employer of many Mennonites, over its refusal to print a collection of his poetry and drawings. Friesens management found the book offensive, especially a drawing entitled "Demon sex." While Rosenblatt complained of "censorship," Friesens president David G. Friesen said, "This is not censorship. We would never ask authors to change or delete anything. But we are a private company—we have the right to refuse to publish something we find offensive." (*Mennonite Reporter*)

current MC model? Some wanted a smaller board. Others liked the current arrangement.

The group proposed that for the first 10 years, half the GB representatives (besides those from associate groups) would be MCs, half GCs.

Lindsay Robinson, Harrisburg, Pa., said that associate groups need to be represented on the GB. Don Steelberg, Wichita, Kan., asked about other groups not represented, such as the various Chinese churches.

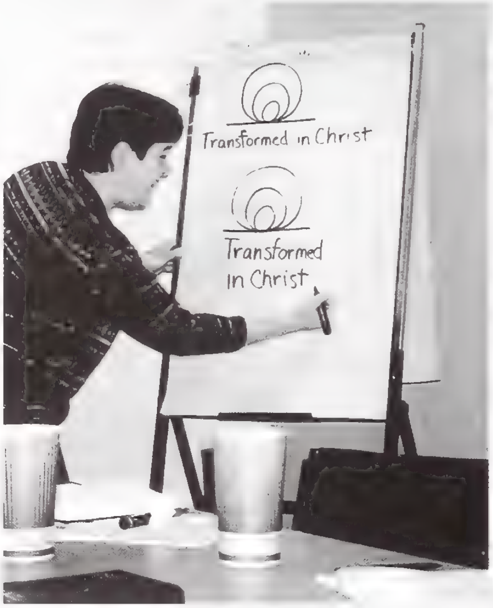
The IC's earlier idea of an "evangelist" for integration had received a cool response. John Murray, Topeka, Ind., said this idea should go to the Vision: Healing and Hope implementation group.

Others agreed to send this idea to the GBs. "This group [IC] is working on the new wineskins," said Robinson. "We need a group to work on the new wine."

In other business the IC

- heard reports from various subgroups,
- welcomed new staff members James Schrag, GC general secretary, and George Stoltzfus, MC general secretary,
- agreed to meet Feb. 28-March 1, May 9-10 and Sept. 19-20, 1997. *Gordon Houser*

Working toward Winnipeg



Dave Linscheid

The Program Committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) is proposing "Transformed in Christ" as the theme for special delegate sessions to be held in Winnipeg July 5-8, 1997.

The committee met Sept. 27-28 at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg to plan the program, outline the worship services and tour facilities.

The primary agenda item for the sessions will be integration with the Mennonite Church, with delegates taking action on any proposals that require a decision before the next GC convention in 1999.

The agenda also will include action on a vision statement for congregational youth ministry and a statement against violence. In addition to conducting business, participants will worship together and hear reports from GC boards.

U.S. delegates will meet July 5. Sessions for U.S. and Canadian delegates will occur from the evening of July 6 through noon on July 8. Activities for children as well as adults are planned. A youth convention will be held at CMBC July 2-8.

The GC sessions will follow the annual convention of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, which will take place July 2-5. Both groups will meet at Immanuel Pentecostal Church, which seats 1,450 people, as well as other sites in Winnipeg. A celebration of the 50th anniversary of CMBC is also scheduled.

Program Committee members are Janeen Bertsche Johnson (pictured above working on logo ideas), Elkhart, Ind., chair; Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Topeka, Kan., secretary; Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau, Goshen, Ind.; Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg, and John Dyck, Winnipeg. Dyck is also the local arrangements chair for the convention, working with eight committees of volunteers from 18 GC churches in Manitoba.

The GC General Board will take action on the Program Committee proposals when it meets in Chicago Nov. 14-15.

Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church celebrated 100 years of services in a church building and 140 years of Mennonite worship in the community Oct. 4-6. The first church meetings were held in homes.

* * *

A video produced by Mennonite Board of Missions in its Ekklesia series, "Peacemaking: Healing and Hope," has helped spark interest in a mediation and conflict resolution program in India. The video includes a segment about the emotional struggles during a major split in the Mennonite Church in Dhamtari, India. Stephen Gonsalves, associate director for Mennonite Central Committee in Calcutta, says the video has been used in several Mennonite churches and development projects in India.

* * *

A new book marking the 500th birthday of Menno Simons was introduced at Eastern Mennonite University's homecoming Oct. 11-13. *Menno Simons: Places, Portraits and Progeny,* written by two specialists in Dutch Anabaptist-Mennonite studies, Mary Sprunger of EMU and Piet Visser, University of Amsterdam, includes reproductions of paintings, engravings, photographs and maps. It will be available in separate English, Dutch and German editions. To order, call Masthof Press, (610) 286-0258.

* * *

A 26-year-old Canadian is walking across Canada to raise awareness of Huntington's disease. Winnipeg native Bryon Peters has seen an uncle, grandfather and his mother suffer from Huntington's, and medical testing shows his sister will probably develop the disease as well. Huntington's is a hereditary brain disorder that causes uncontrollable movements, slurred speech, mental deterioration and personality changes. Eventually it leads to total incapacitation and death. Peters began his walk July 1 at Cape Spear near St. John's, Newfoundland. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

Women's groups continue work of integration

Markham, Ill. (GCMC/MC)—"Each of us comes with probably more questions than answers," said Women in Mission president Liz Klassen of Kitchener, Ont.

Some questions were resolved, but many remained unanswered during the meeting of the executive committees of Women in Mission (WM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church. The group met Oct. 17-19 at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill.

The two women's organizations plan to integrate in 1997, and this joint session continued the tangled process of merging different structures, budgets and memberships.

Revisions to the integration proposal made during the weekend will be sent to regional presidents for feedback and discussed again at a March 1997 meeting of the executive committees. Representatives from women's groups will vote on a final proposal either by mail or at denominational assemblies in summer 1997.

The executive committees are proposing Mennonite Women's Association as the name for the merged body. After hefty discussion about wording, the committees also agreed to suggest a purpose statement that says the group "encourages women to nurture their life in Christ, study the Bible, utilize their gifts, hear each other and engage in mission and service."

Organizational structure dominated much of the discussion. A proposal for a strong binational board was reduced to a binational council, which would meet every two years.

Each national body would function independently, with its own constitution and bylaws. A Canadian board structure is basically in place, so much of the conversation focused on the makeup and role of the U.S. board.

Minority group representation on the U.S. board and executive commit-tee was the center of several impas-sioned exchanges Oct. 18. The WMSC executive committee currently has representatives from the African-American Mennonite Association and Hispanic Mennonite Council, and several in the group asked whether the guaranteed minority representation would be absent in a new structure.

A proposal of one rotating minority representative on the U.S. board didn't sit well. "It's difficult for one ethnic group to represent all [of them]," said Rose Covington, St. Anne, Ill.

Terri Plank Brenneman, South Pasadena, Calif., added that the associate groups in the Mennonite Church "have worked so hard to get a voice. I'd hate to see that effort destroyed."

> *"Each of us comes with probably more questions than answers."*
>
> **Liz Klassen**

After an unscheduled time of prayer and tabling of the issue until Oct. 19, the group decided to propose that representatives from associate or other special interest groups have seats on the U.S. board. They could then request to be on the executive committee.

The group also deliberated on how fast to move in developing one periodical for the merged group. Some of the group said that the publications *Voice* (WMSC) and *Window* (WM) should be discontinued during an interim time of market research and until a new constitution and executives are in place. Others said that the periodical is important for nourishing identity and strengthening support.

"We need to have it kicking the moment we merge," said Susan Gingerich, WMSC president.

In the end, it was decided that the staff would coordinate a survey of constituents on ideas for a new publication and that the group would take further action in March 1997.

Although most of the weekend's business had to do with the nitty-gritty details of creating a new organization, larger questions of identity and loyalty remain. "We know basically how to proceed, and we probably know how to integrate," said Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator. "But I don't know that any of us knows how to build a new soul [for the integrated group] in advance." *Valerie Weaver*

First Mennonite Church of Greendale, B.C., celebrated its 65th anniversary Nov. 10.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes will hold its annual meeting Nov. 15-16 at Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland. For more information, call the MCC Great Lakes office at (330) 857-7721.

• • •

Paint-the-Town Day in Wichita, Kan., Sept. 21, saw more than 800 volunteers paint 50 homes, putting two coats of paint on each. Paint-the-Town Day was part of Wichita-based Mennonite Housing's home-repair program to help senior citizens with low incomes and people with disabilities. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

A Sept. 22-23 consultation in Chicago on the mission of a proposed visitors center in Nazareth, Israel, suggested that the time may be right. But the more than 40 church leaders, mission experts and veterans of Middle East service invited to the meeting by Mennonite Board of Missions also outlined some guidelines and issues needing resolution before "Nazareth Village" becomes concrete. The concept received widespread praise from participants in the coinciding Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding conference at North Park College, while in a gathering of the Mennonite Middle East Reference Group, some wondered, "Would Jesus want a visitors center?" MBM is among several partner organizations testing the feasibility of a re-created first-century village and interpretive center that would illuminate the life and teaching of Jesus in his hometown. Edinburgh (Scotland) Medical Missionary Society, which founded Israel's oldest hospital in 1861, has designated 12 acres of adjacent land for Nazareth Village. MBM worker D. Michael Hostetler, a veteran videographer, is directing a feasibility study scheduled for completion in spring 1997. (*Tom Price*)

Record crowds on the Sept. 21 weekend pushed the total at the Mennonite Central Committee relief sale in Morris, Man., to around $110,000 Cdn. MCC Manitoba director Peter Peters estimated sales were up at least 10 percent from 1995. Part of the money came from sale of 6,000 vereniki made by volunteers. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Kathy Glick, a sophomore at Goshen (Ind.) College, placed first in the 1996 C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest. In her speech, Glick related stories of atrocity she heard while visiting Guatemala and suggested three Christian responses to such occurrences. Second place in the contest went to Andrew Horst, a sophomore at Hesston (Kan.) College, and third place to Melanie Grylls, a student at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. The contest is named for a Mennonite historian who was a professor of history at Goshen and Bluffton (Ohio) colleges.

• • •

Mennonites have gone to the aid of people in Asia and Central America trying to recover from natural disasters that occurred over the summer. Mennonite Central Committee and the Commission on Overseas Mission together contributed $12,000 U.S. ($16,500 Cdn.) to help rebuild schools and homes destroyed by summer floods along the Yangtze River in central China. MCC has also been distributing money to some Mennonite and Mennonite-affiliated churches in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala, to be used for food, supplies and home rebuilding. Nicaragua and Costa Rica bore the brunt of Hurricane Cesar July 27-28. The hurricane brought on mudslides in parts of Guatemala. Donations for this emergency relief effort should be earmarked "Hurricane Cesar relief" and sent to MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; or MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

Integration dominates GC board meetings

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) dominated the work and discussion of the GC program boards at their annual fall meetings.

CHM: The Commission on Home Ministries, meeting Sept. 26-28 at Ward, Colo., took action to recommend that the integrated denominational structures of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church have a binational mission board.

The Mission Integration Task Force asked CHM to respond to its study document, which advocates regional mission centers through which all mission programs could be accessed. The regional centers would relate to a binational board or council.

By consensus, CHM members agreed that they would prefer a binational mission board rather than a council, since the latter would have less authority.

The CHM board will recommend to the task force that every area conference should have representation at a regional center and that regional centers should send representatives to the binational board.

The board heard reports about the process of integrating CHM's Mennonite Voluntary Service with Voluntary Service of Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

Decisions about opening and closing units are now made together. Staff continue to work at integrating their budgets. Plans are to have the two programs fully integrated by late 1997 or early 1998.

COE: Finances shared the spotlight with integration for the Commission on Education board. The financial picture at Faith & Life Press "is serious but not without hope," according to a new business plan for Faith & Life Press (FLP).

The plan was approved, in principle, by the COE board at an Oct. 3-6 meeting in Berne, Ind.

Among the changes proposed in the new plan is a growth in sales from $946,224 in 1995 to $1.34 million in 2001. As a result, by 2002, this increase will allow Faith & Life Press to begin to pay the principal on $270,000 borrowed from the General Conference due to a net loss of $230,597 in 1995.

FLP plans to cut its operating expenses by $95,550 this year. The press has reduced its full-time equivalency from 13.05 in 1995 to 10.1 in 1996.

According to the plan, all FLP products must earn back two-thirds of their cost within the first 12 months of release and 100 percent of their cost within three years. In addition, FLP products will be focused on the following areas: Christian education resources, Bible study and electives, spirituality and worship resources.

Everett Thomas, executive secretary of the MC's Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM), joined the board to talk about the integration of the two denominations.

Thomas proposed that in the interim before complete integration is accomplished MBCM and COE should look at merging key programs where there is no overlap. COE, for example, could provide children's and youth/young adult ministries to MC churches and MBCM could work with GC churches in the area of spiritual formation and worship.

The commission affirmed his initiative and noted that MCs and GCs are already working together in many areas related to Christian education.

COM: The Commission on Overseas Mission board also had its eye on the future during a Sept. 13-14 meeting at Langham, Sask.

Executive secretary Glendon Klaassen noted that COM has mission workers in four new countries—Macau, Chile, Senegal and Thailand—since last March. All personnel were appointed in partnership with other Mennonite mission agencies.

Chair Tom Lehman observed that the many new partnerships are a positive and striking change from how mission work was done in the past.

COM heard reports about prospects for integrating with MBM. Twenty-one of COM's 139 workers are jointly appointed with MBM. In addition, Gregory Rake serves both agencies as secretary for Latin America.

The executive committee took action to ask COM to work with MBM to draft a common overseas personnel policy manual for presentation at the March 1997 Council of Commissions. A late October meeting is planned to discuss this issue as well as recruitment.

MCC boards process changes

Akron, Pa.(MCC)—Change is in the air at Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and international, although what they will become is still unclear.

Part of the June 28-29 MCC U.S. executive committee meeting focused on the history of the MCC U.S. Service Program (now called Community Ministries). MCC U.S. turned 50 in 1996.

Discussion of MCC U.S. Community Ministries centered on term length for service workers. After much discussion, the executive committee approved a change from two-year to three-year terms for Community Ministries service workers, outside of headquarters positions, subject to review in one year.

Tony Siemens

Weaving: *Lawrence Hart said Mennonite Central Committee U.S. must have the "threads" of a new mission statement in place to support changes ahead.*

The committee also appointed a search committee to seek a replacement for Lynette Meck, who leaves her position as MCC U.S. executive director June 30, 1998.

Meeting Sept. 13-14, the executive committee heard regional office staff, particularly from MCC East Coast, raise the possibility of shifting more program from national to regional offices. The suggestion grew from concerns that the MCC U.S. program is too far removed from its constituents.

Committee member Lawrence Hart of Clinton, Okla., said the decentralization discussion was getting ahead of the game and urged the committee to first review and revise its mission statement.

The revised mission statement can then guide decision-making. "It's like weaving," he said. "We've set some threads in place, but they won't hold strength if they don't have a perpendicular thread to support it." The committee agreed to first revise the mission statement and then to do the remaining work.

In action taken, the committee approved the opening of a new service unit in Philadelphia. The unit is intended to foster more minority participation than traditional service units. Criteria for location selection included the number of non-Anglo Mennonite congregations in the urban area and amount of cultural diversity within and among those congregations.

Chicago and New York City were other possible sites, but Philadelphia was selected because of the support of local church leaders who meet regularly for prayer, reflection and business.

Some committee members expressed disappointment that the program would be located in the East, where most of MCC U.S. programming already exists. Hart said there was nothing west of the Mississippi.

However, the committee unanimously supported the Philadelphia location. "Let's hope it works so well that in the future we will have a unit west of the Mississippi," said board chair Rich Garber.

The new unit also carries financial repercussions. Funding will come from the closing of the Atlanta service program and from reduction in other program resources. James Logan, director of Community Ministries, told the committee future unit closings may be necessary if income continues to decline.

MCC international's executive committee met Sept. 27-28, and much of the discussion focused on shrinking income and how to work creatively with that reality.

The executive committee decided in June to cap MCC spending in North America at 25 percent. This has prodded the committee to re-evaluate its relationship to other parts of MCC, particularly regional and provincial offices.

A group of staff representing each of the MCC bodies met for a first annual meeting last April. Some executive committee members suggested that that group could do much to coordinate activity among MCC bodies.

Other business included approving a memo of understanding about operations between the United States and Canada that, among other things, called for an increase in the number of Canadians on the MCC binational board from a minimum of eight to a minimum of 10. *Larry Penner*

If the product offerings at this year's Christian Booksellers Association convention are any indication, Christian bookstores may have to find another name to describe their businesses. Less floor space is being devoted to books and Bibles and much more to a wide variety of giftware, such as Scripture verses, motivational mottoes and inspirational scenes on everything from men's ties to engravings on artificial rocks. (*Faith Today*)

• • •

Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College's Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies has been awarded a $150,000 grant from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services. The grant will enable CPACS to work in five cities with high concentrations of refugees recently arrived from Bosnia and Iraq. CPACS will provide cross-cultural training to teams of multicultural interpreters drawn in part from the refugee community. Refugee resettlement workers report that Iraqi and Bosnian refugees experience great difficulty settling into American life, partly due to the trauma they endured before arriving in the United States. *Joy Hofer*

• • •

The Evangelical Mennonite Church in Argentina has begun a campaign against a proposed action of the U.S. Congress to lift the prohibition on sale of arms to Latin America. Raul Garcia, president of Mennonite World Conference and pastor of the Mennonite church in Pehuajo, near Buenos Aires, said that lifting the ban would promote the arming of Latin America instead of providing "instruments of peace" in the form of health care, education and encouragement to resolve conflict through dialogue. MWC sent a letter, signed by Garcia, to U.S. President Bill Clinton, as did Juan Gutierrez, coordinator for peace and justice of the Argentine Evangelical Mennonite Church. Copies of both letters went to Argentine President Carlos Menem and to leaders of both the Argentine and U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

The Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale, held Sept. 28 at Fishersville, Va., grossed a record $189,132 for Mennonite Central Committee. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale, held Sept. 28 in Goshen, Ind., is expected to raise about $560,000 for Mennonite Central Committee, depending on the final sale price of the Shalom House. The highest-priced quilt went for $3,600. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The joint Environmental Task Force of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church met Sept. 21-22 in Newton, Kan. A current project is a book including the major addresses from the Creation Summit, subtitled "Shaping an Anabaptist Theology for Living," held in February 1995 in Wisconsin. The group also plans to talk with Mennonite institutions about their environmental policies and practices and to set up an environmental discussion group on the Internet.

• • •

Many libraries in Winston-Salem, N.C., hometown of poet Maya Angelou, have been closed or had their hours substantially reduced because of lack of funds. So Angelou put out a request in *Publishers Weekly* for book donations to start a library at her home congregation, Mount Zion Baptist Church. When Susan Janzen, editorial director of Faith & Life Press in Newton, Kan., saw the note, she responded by sending more than 60 titles, including curriculum for children, youth and adults. "I saw the project as a literacy issue. But it is a justice issue, too, because the libraries have been closed in poor neighborhoods and in African-American neighborhoods," says Janzen.

MINISTERS

Gareth Brandt is youth minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and Northwest Mennonite Conference.

Steve Conrad was installed as pastor at Trinity Church, Hillsboro, Kan., Oct. 20.

Bob Cottrill, pastor at Cedar Valley Church, Mission, B.C., was ordained Oct. 20.

Edwin Epp will be pastor at Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, beginning in December. He had formerly been pastor at Faith United Mennonite Church, Leamington, Ont.

Walter Friesen is chaplain at Bethesda Home, Goessel, Kan.

Joy Lapp is interim pastor at Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo., until Dec. 31.

Claire Osinkosky was licensed and installed as pastor at Trenton (Ohio) Church this spring.

Katherine Pitts was installed as pastor at Salina (Kan.) Church Oct. 6.

Kathleen Rochester is associate pastor of family life at Peace Church, Richmond, B.C.

Mark Stahl, pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church, was ordained Sept. 15.

April Yamasaki was ordained Oct. 27 as pastor at Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

WORKERS

David and **Mary Bergen**, Hope Church, Winnipeg, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Quang Ngai, Vietnam, teaching English as a foreign language.

Heather Bock, First Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a one-year MCC term in Winnipeg as an administrative assistant in human resources.

Bill and **Kristen Conwell**, Portland (Ore.) Church, are beginning one-year MCC terms in Harlingen, Texas, Bill as an attorney, Kristen unassigned.

Leonard Doell, Aberdeen (Sask.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC term in Saskatoon as native concerns coordinator.

Kenneth and **Marion Dueck**, Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., are beginning nine-month MCC terms in Seminole, Texas, as teachers in an Old Colony Mennonite school.

Sherri Enns, Breslau (Ont.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., as an administrative secretary in MCC's communication department.

George and **Mary Fast**, Breslau (Ont.) Church, are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., George working in the maintenance department and Mary as a server in the Nav Jiwan International Tea Room in Ephrata, Pa.

Bill Ginther, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, is beginning a one-year MCC term in Saskatoon, as manager of the Village Green furniture/appliance store.

Jerry and **Leann Goertzen Loeppky**, West Abbotsford Church, Abbotsford, B.C., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Sharmoukh, Egypt, doing development work and teaching English.

Carol and **Jake Hamm**, Gladstone (Man.) Church, are beginning nine-month MCC terms in Seminole, Texas, working as teachers in an Old Colony Mennonite school.

Leanne Heinrichs, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Kingston, Jamaica, as a tutor.

Jenni Holsinger, Seattle Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Cairo, Egypt, as an English teacher.

Abe Janzen is executive director for MCC Alberta. He replaces **Dick Neufeld**.

Art and **Janice Klassen**, Mannheim (Ont.) Church, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, as office coordinators.

Karin and **Matius Larson Krisetya**, Madison (Wis.) Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Jamaica, Karin as a teacher and Matius as a rural project officer.

April Laskowski, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., is beginning a one-year MCC term in Winnipeg, as a secretary/social worker.

David and **Hannah Neufeld**, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Indonesia.

Carmen Pauls, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., has begun a three-year MCC term in the West Bank as a peace development worker.

Carol Penner is staffperson for family violence concerns for MCC Ontario. She replaces **Esther Epp-Tiessen**.

Vern Preheim, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., has begun a two-year MCC term in North Newton, Kan., where he will work as a resource development coordinator.

Agatha Reimer, Bethel Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man., is beginning a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a store clerk at Ten Thousand Villages (formerly known as Self-Help Crafts) in Ephrata, Pa.

Elaine Shenk, Albuquerque (N.M.) Church, is beginning an 18-month MCC term in Albuquerque, as an administrative assistant.

Bram Siemens is a mission associate with COM in Cuauhtemoc, Mexico. He has served there since 1988, editing a newspaper for German-speaking people there, and directing Low German radio broadcasts.

Betty Unger, Crystal City (Man.) Church, is beginning an eight-month MCC term in Seminole, Texas, as a teachers unit liason.

Moving?

Let us know your new address six weeks ahead.

Goshen College seeks a **director of computing services** to be responsible for all computing and network services to all academic and administrative units, and to play a key role in setting institutional directions in broad uses of information technology. We seek a creative person with expertise in computers, experience in management and an understanding of the educational potential for computers and networks. Director supervises a staff of three or more professionals and three support workers. The position offers a 12-month contract and reports to the Provost. M.A. required. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, seeks faculty committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Position is open Jan. 1, 1997, or before.

Send resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until **Nov. 21**.

Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas (MENNO) Project seeks 10 individuals to "vacation with a purpose" **Feb. 1-15, 1997, in Colombia**. Spend time at the Mennonite Retreat Center in Cachipay doing construction, sewing, painting, carpentry and general cleaning. MENNO Project is designed to be educational as well. Time will be spent in Bogota learning about the Mennonite church by visiting churches, schools and marketplaces. Selection on a first-come, first-served basis. Respond early!

For more information contact **Karen McCabe-Juhnke, Commission on Overseas Mission, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100, ext. 239;** e-mail **kmj@gcmc.org**.

The **Waterloo Centre of Shalom Counselling Services** is seeking candidates for the half-time position of **executive director**, responsible for the day-to-day operation of the center. Duties include: supervision of staff; financial management; maintenance of professional standards for the center; carrying a limited caseload.

The successful candidate will possess the following: membership in a professional credentialing body such as CAPE, AAMFT, OCCSW; proven administrative skills; counseling and teaching capabilities; strong interpersonal skills; ability to relate well to churches and community agencies.

The position is open April 16, 1997. Please forward resumes before **Nov. 30** to: **Search Committee, Timothy W. Thiessen, 187 Wentworth Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 3S3; (519) 576-0931; tthiess@sentex.net.**

Program director and program representative for adult degree completion program. Director: experience in management and administration essential. Master's degree in business or related area required. Responsible to implement and administer program. Representative responsibilities: coordinate student recruitment, admissions and financial affairs.

Faculty position in biology, Ph.D. required. Area of specialization: microbiology; area of competence: genetics or anatomy. Teaching and research experience preferred.

Must be familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Send letter of application, vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references **by Nov. 20** to **Dr. William Hawk, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**; or e-mail **dean@emu. edu**. EMU reserves the right to fill these positions before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Goshen College invites applicants for a full-time tenure-track position in the **English department**. Ph.D. required. Duties include teaching general education courses in literature and writing, preferably with one or more of the following special interests: Victorian literature, modern British literature, composition or women's literature. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, seeks faculty committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send a curriculum vitae and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660;** e-mail **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until **Dec. 15**.

Are your retirement investments rooted in your values?

Roots are unseen, but they find their expression in the light of day.

Same with living your beliefs, such as investing your hard-earned retirement money according to your values.

That's the reason for MMA Praxis Mutual Funds. With MMA Praxis, you can get an IRA that invests in enterprises that enhance peace, justice, and the quality of human life. An IRA that can really express your values.

Contact an MMA counselor or call

1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.
For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

M M A

Akron Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time **church administrator** beginning mid-December. The administrator gives general oversight to the administrative functions of the church, including managing the church's financial system, supervising clerical and maintenance staff, supervising church facilities and assisting in the organizational work of the pastors. Computer skills necessary and minimum 2 to 3 years experience in an organizational/administrative setting. A four-year college degree or equivalent experience required.

Direct inquiries and resumes to **Congregational Chair, Akron Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 208, Akron, PA 17501; fax (717) 859-1488.**

MENNO-HOF PRESENTS:

J. C. WENGER
STORY CORNER

PETER DYCK
STORYTELLER

Enjoy the classic story video that has delighted Menno-Hof visitors for years.

Don't miss Peter's spellbinding stories of war, famine, relief and resettlement.

Give the gift of video to your family & church!!!

☐ PETER DYCK: INSPIRATIONAL STORIES	$19.95
☐ PETER DYCK: FAMILY STORIES	$19.95
☐ PETER DYCK: HUMOROUS STORIES	$19.95
☐ ENTIRE 3 VIDEO PETER DYCK COLLECTION	$49.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: STORY CORNER	$19.95
☐ J.C: BAPTISM & CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: TOUGH ???'S ABOUT THE BIBLE	$19.95
☐ ENTIRE 5 VIDEO J.C. WENGER COLLECTION	$89.95
☐ OUR MENNONITE LEGACY (JAN GLEYSTEEN)	$24.95

(U.S. Dollars; Indiana residents add 5% sales tax)

Send payment and $5 shipping & handling to:
Menno-Hof, Box 701, Shipshewana IN 46565
Phone: 219-768-4117 Fax: 219-768-4118

PLANNED GIVING

STRETCH your savings

Consider a gift annuity.*

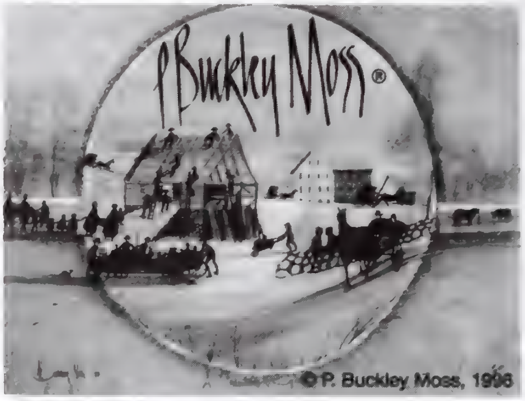
Make a gift to MCC now, and receive payments toward your living costs starting on a date you choose. Payment amount depends on your age and the date payments begin. MCC will receive the part of your gift left after your death.

To learn more about gift annuities, contact MCC or your Mennonite Foundation representative.

*Gift annuities are not available in California.

Mennonite Central Committee 717 859-3889
Mennonite Foundation 800 348-7468

A Community Spirit by



A new limited edition print, *A Community Spirit*, by world-renowned artist P. Buckley Moss is available from MCC. The total purchase price benefits the people of Africa through MCC's relief and development work.

Buy your signed, numbered, 18" x 24" print for $275 Cdn./$200 U.S. plus $6.85 Cdn./$5 U.S. shipping. PA residents add 6% sales tax ($12). Your purchase does not qualify as a charitable contribution. Contact Peter Passage at MCC (717) 859-3889 or pcp@mccus.org.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Director of music: Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa. Position will coordinate diverse congregational music program; includes directing congregational choir(s), planning for worship music played and sung, development of vocal/instrumental gifts of congregation. Two-fifths time position open immediately.

Contact **Joy Sawatzky at (215) 723-3088.**

Inorganic chemistry: Tenure-track faculty position to begin fall 1997. Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry required, along with ability to teach a standard sophomore analytical chemistry course.

Contact **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 West College Avenue, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 1997, and continues until an appointment is made.

More information may be obtained from **www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac**. For an appointment application, e-mail your full name and mailing address to **chemistryvac@bluffton.edu**.

Scholarships for students planning to attend **Urbana '96** are available on a first-come, first-served basis from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The deadline for applications is **Dec. 1**.

Urbana '96 is an InterVarsity-sponsored student missions conference Dec. 27-31 at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. For more information, contact **Karen McCabe-Juhnke, COM, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; e-mail com@gcmc.org**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid has an opening for **sales support manager** to supervise sales representatives and agent support staff. Responsible to lead department in providing sales support to agents and regional managers. Qualified applicants will be licensed in health, life and investments, possess a CLU or ChFC designation and have prior management and insurance sales experience. MMA is a church-affiliated insurance and financial services company. We offer a competitive salary, excellent benefits and a nonsmoking work environment.

Send or fax resume to **MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax (219) 533-5264**.

ANY WAY YOU WRAP IT...

THIS GIFT WILL BE A HIT!

**You will bring beauty to family and friends
and much-needed income to the artisan who created it.
This holiday season purchase your gifts from
Ten Thousand Villages, a job creation program
of Mennonite Central Committee.
Ten Thousand Villages is the new name of SELFHELP Crafts.**

To find the store nearest you, call one of the offices or visit our website:
http://www.villages.ca

TEN THOUSAND
VILLAGES

704 MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 500, AKRON, PENNSYLVANIA 17501-0500
TELEPHONE: 717 859 8100
65 HERITAGE DRIVE, BOX 869, NEW HAMBURG, ONTARIO NOB 2GO
TELEPHONE: 519 662 1879

Reviews

● ● ● ● ▼

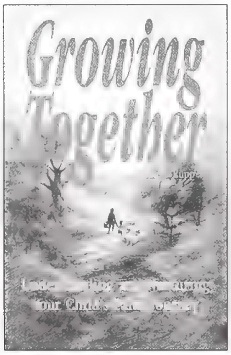
BOOKS

JOURNEYING TO FAITH

Growing Together: Understanding and Nurturing Your Child's Faith Journey *by Anne Neufeld Rupp (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 244 pages, $11.95 U.S./ $16.95 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Norma Peters Duerksen, Smithville, Ohio

Journeys take us through many twists and curves down roads leading to surprises and joys as well as pain and suffering. So it is with our faith development and that of our children. In order to help their children's faith grow, parents need to nurture their own faith so they will have something to pass on to the next generation.



Journeying is the metaphor Neufeld Rupp uses to describe life as a parent. Grass, wild strawberries in a patch of sunshine, a river to be crossed, thunder and lightning and a pond are all symbols of life stages.

Each chapter is full of helpful information and advice on different topics affecting parents and their role in nurturing their children's faith journeys. There is so much in these sections to digest that readers may want to take small bites—easy to do, since the topics are separated by subtitles in the form of questions.

Each chapter's information section ends with helpful suggestions on how to parent wisely, based on the material covered in that section.

Not all of the book is information for the head. Practical activities to do with the family help you immediately apply what you've read.

This book is great for families as well as parenting groups and Sunday school classes that want to focus on parenting issues. Scripture texts, questions and group activities will help any teacher get the discussion started. This book could also serve as a resource for family nights at church.

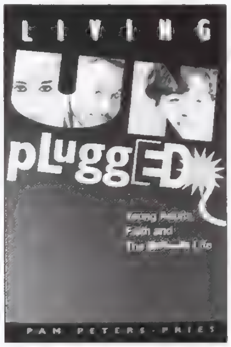
AGAINST THE CURRENT

Living Unplugged: Young Adults, Faith and the Uncommon Life *by Pam Peters-Pries (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 144 pages, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Mark Diller Harder, Kitchener, Ont.

In a complex, fast-paced world, filled with information overload, rapid change and confusing choices, Pam Peters-Pries challenges young adults: "Unplug!" Live alternatively. Living unplugged means "being tuned in enough to the world to recognize the truly important and meaningful in it [and] ... maintaining enough distance from the world to avoid being swept up in the current of the truly trivial."

This book is a step-by-step guide through the landscape of young adulthood. In an easy reading style, Peters-Pries explores most of the major issues, life skills and decisions faced by this generation. The book is divided into 11 short chapters, each exploring one facet of young adult life. Topics include decision making, time and financial management, career planning, sexuality and gender roles, pluralism and the relationship of young adults to parents, the church and Anabaptism. Chapters are practical and full of examples and concrete suggestions. There are several references to other useful resources. Each chapter ends with helpful discussion questions.



As a young adult herself, Peters-Pries' strength is her grasp of the uniqueness of this generation. The candid language, tangible examples and personal insights hit the mark. She deals with the realities of "McJobs," moving back in with parents and difficult economic prospects. She captures the paradoxes and generational struggles of life for the 20-somethings. She does this, thankfully, without using Generation X terminology.

My only criticism is that at times we get too many small details and advice on a topic and not enough of the larger picture and what it might mean to "unplug." For example, rather than eight pages on how to make and keep a budget, complete with charts and income/expense projections, I wanted a framework for how to make financial

To help you with your
1997 Vacation Plans,
TOURMAGINATION
is pleased to announce...

Jamaica in Winter .... Feb. 21 – 28
Celebrate Paraguay .... Mar. 27 – April 7
Cities of the Apostle Paul .... May 10 – 23
Highlights of China .... May 21 – June 12
Spectacular Scandinavia and its Fjords .... June 17 – July 1
Menno Simons European Sampler .... July 7 – 24
Alaska, Yukon & Inside Passage Tour/Cruise .... July 9 – 19
Berlin, Luther & the Mennonite Story in Poland .... Sept. 12 – 26
Australia – New Zealand .... Feb. 13 – Mar. 7/98

Call 1-800-565-0451 for more information

TOURMAGINATION
22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8
1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960
Reg. #1567624

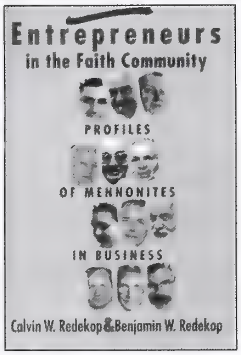
decisions and talk honestly to other young adults about this almost taboo subject. The book is probably most helpful to those just entering young adulthood. It would make a good starting point for a young adult Sunday school class or a great gift for a graduating high school student.

BUSINESS SHAPED BY FAITH

Entrepreneurs in the Faith Community: Profiles of Mennonites in Business, *edited by Calvin W. Redekop and Benjamin W. Redekop (Herald Press, 1996, 268 pages, $17.95 U.S./$25.75 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Ted Koontz, Elkhart, Ind.

The heart of this volume consists of 11 case-study biographies of 20th-century North American Mennonite entrepreneurs. Each chapter is written by a different author, highlighting what are clearly different individuals and circumstances. Their business interests include construction, real estate, retailing, mining, publishing and agriculture. The subjects are men and women and about equally from Swiss/South German and Prussian/Russian backgrounds. Each has a fascinating and often inspiring story, giving vivid testimony to the enormous energy, drive and creativity among us.



The central themes in the case studies revolve around the relationship of Mennonites on the cutting edge of business to their faith communities. The relationship, as is well known and here often poignantly illustrated, is not always easy. Especially difficult to see is the way business success can produce a toleration or admiration (even if grudging) while business failure often leads to clearer isolation or judgment.

At the same time, it is plain that often faith communities provide crucial influences that mold and modify the entrepreneurial instincts and abilities of some—and that faith sustained them during financial or other crises. There is also much evidence here of the desire of some entrepreneurs to use their gifts for the sake of others, including their church, while some are not sure if there is a place for those gifts among good Mennonites. And the stories speak honestly of weakness and failure in those studied, not only of their strengths. They also reflect significantly different perspectives on appropriate lifestyles and patterns of giving to charitable causes.

This is an engaging and easily read window to the world of Mennonites in business. Reading and discussing it can contribute to better understanding between entrepreneurs and the rest of us who too often look at "them" with a mixture of awe and suspicion.

Resources

FOR ADVENT

- **Untold Stories of Advent** by Mark Vincent (Faith & Life Press, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) offers new perspectives; good option for group Bible study. A free study guide is available.
- **Celebrating Advent** by Helen Johns (Faith & Life Press, $9.95 U.S./$14.95 Cdn.) is a five-session study guide for junior high age in the Fast Lane Bible Studies series.
- **Biblical Meditations for Advent and the Christmas Season** by Carroll Stuhlmueller (Paulist Press, $6.95 U.S.) provides daily Bible readings and reflections.
- **Advent Thirst ... Christmas Hope** by Anita M. Constance (Paulist Press, $4.95 U.S.) includes Scripture, meditation, prayer and journaling space.
- **Advent Arts and Christmas Crafts, with Prayers and Rituals for Family, School and Church** by Jeanne Heiberg (Paulist Press, $9.95 U.S.) includes projects and readings for preschoolers to teens.
- **100 Meditations for Advent and Christmas** (Upper Room, $12.95 U.S.) contains devotions selected from *The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide.*
- **The Vigil: Keeping Watch in the Season of Christ's Coming** by Wendy M. Wright (Upper Room, $9.95 U.S.) combines traditional themes, Scripture and personal stories.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **group insurance sales specialist** to sell and service self-insured health products, brokered life, LTD and STD products to employers and congregations. Qualified applicants will be licensed in life and health insurance, willing to travel up to half-time and willing to pursue a professional designation such as CEBS or HIA. Previous sales or marketing experience is desirable. MMA is a church-affiliated insurance and financial services company. We offer a competitive salary, excellent benefits and a nonsmoking work environment.

Send or fax resume to **MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax (219) 533-5264.**

Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz., is seeking a **pastor** to serve on its pastoral team. We are a congregation of 70-85 people with families, young adults and a few people over 50. We are an urban, Anabaptist community that is energetic and diverse. We are searching for a man or woman who is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, enjoys preaching, teaching and administration, and could work as part of a team. Approximate 2/3-time position available with salary based on the Mennonite income guidelines.

Please contact **Pastoral Search Team, c/o Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, 6044 E. 30th St., Tucson, AZ 85711.**

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION for Oct. 25, 1996, of *The Mennonite*, publication no. 259-330, published semimonthly (24 issues annually) at Newton, Kansas, 67114, required by Act of Congress (39 U.S.C. 3685). Annual subscription price $28. Published by General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church of Newton, Kansas, a religious nonprofit organization. Editor, Gordon Houser, of Newton, Kansas. Security holders owning 1 percent or more of total securities, none. (No stock issued.) Known bondholders, etc., none.

Average no. copies each issue printed during preceding 12 months, 8,600; average counter sales, 1; average paid and requested mail subscriptions, 8,406; average total paid and requested circulation, 8,407; average free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, 102; average total distribution, 8,509; average copies not distributed, 91.

Actual no. copies of single issue printed nearest to filing date (Oct. 25, 1996) 7,754; counter sales, 1; paid and requested mail subscriptions, 7,551; total paid and requested circulation, 7,552; free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, 102; total distribution, 7,654; copies not distributed, 100.

Signed, Gordon Houser, Editor

************CAR-RT SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 514
Library
3003 Benham Ave
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Peace and security with justice in the Middle East

J. Daryl Byler

Our Mennonite Central Committee delegation visited Abu Salim in his wood shop—literally, a cave in the Bethlehem hillside. At one time, Salim, a Palestinian Christian and father of two children, employed six craftsmen who helped carve Nativity scenes, crosses and praying hands from native olive wood. Now, because of an Israeli-enforced closure of Bethlehem and other parts of the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza, there is no market for Salim's crafts.

Salim, a trade-union leader, remembers June 26. It was the last day he sold a wood craft. His crew of six has been laid off. In recent weeks, unemployment in Bethlehem has spiked to 95 percent. Salim now works alone, living off his savings, hoping someday things will be better.

Closures are part of a cycle of violence in the Middle East. Israel closes the borders to Gaza and the West Bank in response to Palestinian acts of violence. Palestinians view closures as a suffocating siege—collective punishment for the acts of a few. Closure causes enormous hardship and frustration for Palestinians, eventually erupting into further acts of violence.

A cup of tea: Everywhere our MCC delegation visited Oct. 6-13, we heard stories about the pervasive impact of the current closure. In Gaza, tens of thousands of Palestinians are cut off from jobs in Israel, resulting in high unemployment. Women at Terre des Hommes, a child nutrition center, reported that poverty and malnutrition are on the rise. Father Manuel Mussallem, head of the Latin Patriarchate School, told us children now come to school after drinking only a cup of tea for breakfast. In Bethlehem, Zoughbi Zoughbi, director of Wi'am, a Palestinian mediation center, cannot attend his church in Jerusalem. Even the governor of Bethlehem cannot receive visits from his daughter and granddaughter who live in Gaza. In Hebron, the Arab Evangelical Home and School, begun by Mennonites Ida and Ada Stoltzfus, was forced to close for 11 days in recent weeks because Palestinians were confined to their homes for 20 to 22 hours a day.

Repeatedly we heard Palestinians say the peace process is dead—or at best, badly in need of resuscitation. Some Palestinians believe the Oslo accords—as the peace process is popularly known—have been fatally flawed from the beginning. They believe the accords heavily favor Israel and were pressed upon the Palestinians by Israel's friend, the United States. Many Palestinians do not believe newly elected Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will honor the existing agreements. And the toughest issues—whether Jerusalem will be a shared city, whether Palestine will be an independent state, and the future of illegal Jewish settlements that proliferate across Palestinian lands—have yet to be negotiated.

I returned home with a heavy heart about the possibility for peace in the Middle East. Of course, we cannot resolve Middle Eastern issues from North America. But after listening to people in the region, I am convinced that there are several issues we must speak to if the peace process is to have a chance.

- **New negotiators:** Palestinians have repeatedly asked for European involvement in the peace negotiations. The United States—viewed as showing favoritism toward Israel—has insisted on being the sole broker for peace. Sharing the mediator role will add integrity to the process.
- **Balanced U.S. pressure:** The United States should continue to condemn Palestinian acts of violence against Israelis. It should continue to challenge the Palestinian Authority to respect the human rights of Palestinians and develop a strong democratic government.

Much more could be done to hold Israel accountable. The United States gives Israel more than $3 billion annually in foreign aid—more than a quarter of the U.S. foreign aid budget. The United States is in a position to insist that Israel abide by its agreements made under the Oslo Peace Accords, that it honor United Nations resolutions that give protection and rights to Palestinians and that it use due process of law instead of collective punishments like closure.

I returned to Washington committed to tell Abu Salim's story. I returned with a renewed commitment to pray for and be a voice for shalom—peace and security, with justice, for all people in the Middle East.

J. Daryl Byler is director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office. Reprinted with permission from Mennonite Weekly Review.

Recyclable

Inside

'Strangers no more' / p. 11

Our God the three-in-one / p. 12

Symposium looks at Gordon Kaufman's theology / p. 13

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 22
NOVEMBER 26, 1996

MENNONITE BIBLICAL
ELKHART
LIBRARY

Mennonites in India

Stories of Mennonite groups in India, the history of mission work there and the Indian churches that have developed and now will host the next Mennonite World Conference assembly (pages 3-10)

The harvest of the gospel in India

Prologue

The 13th Mennonite World Conference assembly will be held Jan. 6-12, 1997, in Calcutta, India. This issue can serve as an introduction to the Mennonite churches in India. Sometime after the assembly we will devote an issue to that historic meeting.

Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors, solicited the articles on pages 3-10, which tell the history of mission work in India by the various Mennonite groups that have worked there. These stories leave you impressed by the dedication of the mission workers who served there and by the growth and maturity of the Indian churches there today. It hasn't been a bed of roses, but the gospel has flowered.

Pearl Sensenig writes about a young Mennonite vounteer's experience in Indonesia (page 11). And our moderator, Darrell Fast, begins a three-part series on the Trinity (page 12), a part of our confession of faith.

A number of people have asked me when *The Mennonite* and the *Gospel Herald*, the Mennonite Church magazine, are going to merge. My simple answer: I don't know. Discussions have begun, but many details have to be worked out. In the meantime, let me assure you that you will continue to receive *The Mennonite* until there is a new magazine, and your subscription will be honored, either applied to the new paper or refunded accordingly. *gh*

Next issue: Advent and Christmas

Cover: Photo by John Taylor (WCC)

Contents

FEATURES

3 Mennonites in India

Stories of Mennonite groups in India, the history of mission work there and the Indian churches that have developed and now will host the next Mennonite World Conference assembly

3 General Conference Mennonite Church

6 Mennonite Church

7 Mennonite Brethren Church

8 United Missionary Church

10 Brethren in Christ

DEPARTMENTS

11 Profile

12 Bible

13 News

18 Record

22 Reviews

24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Periodical postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser
Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher
Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller
Art director: John Hiebert
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General Conference Mennonite Church

Mennonites in India

Editor's note: *The following articles on mission work in India have been written for Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors. Mennonite World Conference will meet in Calcutta, India, Jan. 6-12, 1997.*

General Conference Mennonite Church

Ruth Unrau

Bhubaneshwar was one of five little boys who sat in a row on Helen Kornelsen's verandah in India before and after school reading books.

"Bhubaneshwar grew up to become one of our best evangelists," Helen writes. "He was enthusiastic, a man with a happy gospel to share. People thronged around him at bazaars, and then he would point to the books he had for sale, all displayed before him on a cloth."

His two sons, preschoolers, decided on their own initiative to help him. In the small bazaar near their home, they spread books out on a cloth. One boy called out the books for sale and the other took in the money.

On a return visit to India in 1989, Helen met Kailash, one of the boys, who is now a primary school teacher. He was one of the second or third generation of converts she had known as a missionary when she served from 1948 to 1985. The first generation of Indian Christians came from villages, farmers for the most part. The children of these first converts attended mission schools, then found work as schoolteachers, village literacy teachers, health workers and evangelists. Many of the third and fourth generations have moved into professions as engineers, doctors, headmasters, seminary graduates and teachers, bankers or government employees.

The late Paul Kraybill, when he was executive secretary for Mennonite World Conference, wrote, "The India mission field probably has a greater resource of trained, able people than any other Mennonite, non-German constituency in the Two-Thirds World."

The thrust of missionary work included in those early days what pioneer P.A. Penner called "soup, soap and salvation": feeding the hungry, offering rudimentary health care and bringing the gospel to people

Mennonites in India

The church in India today has seen lepers cleansed and the blind receive sight, knowing that they have left the darkness and come into the light.

suppressed by Hinduism. The efforts became focused on education, medical work and evangelism.

Education: The schools, primary and secondary, are now supported by the government. However, Beacon School, the last organized by the Mennonite Mission, is a successful private school in Korba funded by tuition. Seven thousand students are taught in seven branches, and two other branches have been taken over by Korba industries. Mr. Lalchuangliana of the Emmanuel Hospital Association told visiting missionaries recently that he was much impressed by the graduates of Jansen Memorial School. He says he finds these fine workers in many areas of India and that you could not see the same results in any other mission effort.

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church assisted in the support of Premanand Bagh at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Bagh will return to the faculty of Allahabad Bible Seminary at the end of his studies. Shekhar Singh from the faculty of Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, is a candidate for study at AMBS. Ron Flaming, currently principal of Woodstock School in Mussoorie, is supported by COM.

Medical work: The two hospitals at Champa and Jagdeeshpur are under the management of the Emmanuel Hospital Association, with Mr. Lalchaungliana as its current executive secretary. Patrice Flaming has been assigned by COM to serve as director of human resources for EHA, arranging for in-service education for nurses and helping with recruitment.

Although many of the church leaders regretted that the hospitals had been turned over to this organization rather than to the Indian church, the hospitals are thriving under EHA management. COM helps with modest funding. Evangelists from the hospitals work in the villages among unreached tribes and caste people. A medical team led by Joe Duerksen, a former missionary doctor, visited last January. Champa Christian Hospital has 70 beds, and Sewa Bhawan has 100. Although a number of improvements in building and equipment have been added, there are basic needs for better staff quarters, vehicles for village work, and maintenance. But visitors have reported that the care is unsurpassed and that the cost per patient is considerably less than in other hospitals.

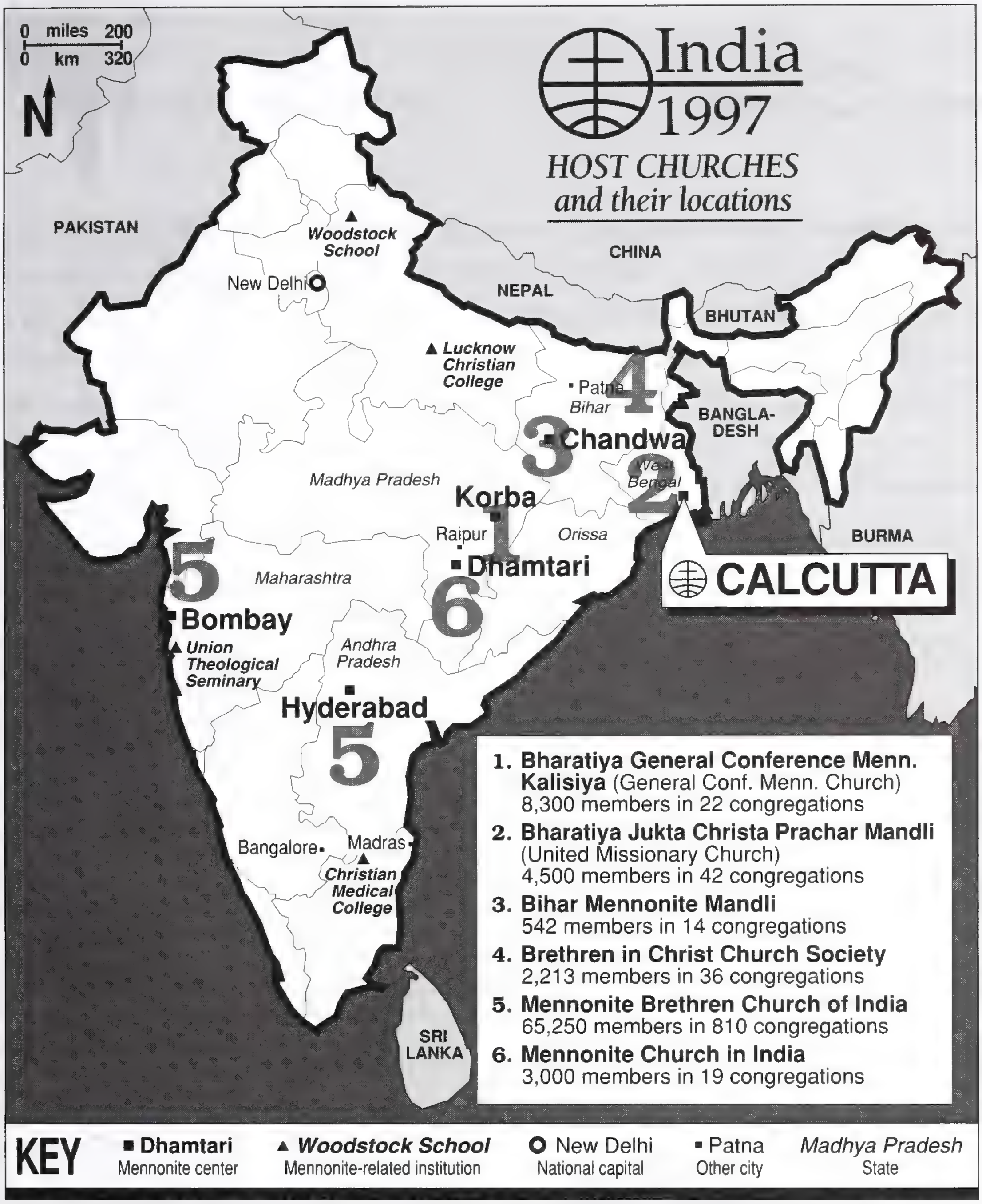
The Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church: Although the effectiveness of the church is weakened as two groups continue to claim leadership, the church is maturing as those handling funds are held accountable and the church conference disciplines its own. With 22 congregations in 55 places of worship, the church community numbers 12,000. The conference is supporting its pastors, although one of the goals of the church is to increase the inadequate salaries and pensions. COM helps fund a program of evangelism and church planting.

When Lubin and Tillie Jantzen visited the mission area in 1986, they found that many of the sons and daughters of village Christians now live in urban areas. "They honored the Lord when they went into the cities, making contributions in all kinds of ways," say the Jantzens.

One of the Indian church leaders ended a questionnaire with this comment: "I would quote Matthew 4:16 as a tribute to the pioneer work done by our mission: 'The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light and for those who sat in the region and

Education: *Shekhar Singh teaches at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India.*

Angela Rempel


India
1997
HOST CHURCHES
and their locations
0 miles 200
0 km 320
N
PAKISTAN
CHINA
NEPAL
BHUTAN
BANGLA-DESH
BURMA
SRI LANKA
Woodstock School
New Delhi
Lucknow Christian College
Patna
Bihar
Chandwa
West Bengal
Korba
Madhya Pradesh
Raipur
Orissa
Dhamtari
CALCUTTA
Maharashtra
Bombay
Union Theological Seminary
Andhra Pradesh
Hyderabad
Bangalore
Madras
Christian Medical College
1
2
3
4
5
5
5
6
1. Bharatiya General Conference Menn. Kalisiya (General Conf. Menn. Church) 8,300 members in 22 congregations
2. Bharatiya Jukta Christa Prachar Mandli (United Missionary Church) 4,500 members in 42 congregations
3. Bihar Mennonite Mandli 542 members in 14 congregations
4. Brethren in Christ Church Society 2,213 members in 36 congregations
5. Mennonite Brethren Church of India 65,250 members in 810 congregations
6. Mennonite Church in India 3,000 members in 19 congregations
KEY
Dhamtari Mennonite center
Woodstock School Mennonite-related institution
New Delhi National capital
Patna Other city
Madhya Pradesh State

SOURCE: Mennonite Encyclopedia Vol. V, Mennonite World Conference

Meetinghouse map by Rich Preheim

shadow of death, light has dawned'; and Matthew 11:5: 'The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.'"

The church in India today has lived with these promises, having seen lepers cleansed and the blind receive sight, knowing that they have left the darkness and come into the light. One respondent to the questionnaire said it simply: "What the General Conference Mennonite Mission has done in India cannot be written on this small piece of paper."

Ruth Unrau, North Newton, Kan., is the author of A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose *(Commission on Overseas Mission, 1996). (See review on page 22.)*

Mennonite Church

Valerie Weaver

India, the seventh-largest country in the world, was the site of the first overseas mission effort of the Mennonite Church. What began as famine relief work of North American Mennonites in India in 1899 seeped into other areas: hospitals, orphanages, schools and church structures. The last Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers returned to North America earlier this decade.

The town of Dhamtari in the state of Madhya Pradesh, where the first Mennonite missionaries settled, continues to be a nerve center for Mennonites in India. The church-sponsored hospital and nursing school are widely known in the region, and the largest Mennonite congregation in India is located in Dhamtari.

A gradual and sometimes painful transfer of power from North American missionaries to Indian Mennonites began in the late 1930s, when national leaders who wanted the power of self-determination began protesting the role of missionaries. By the early 1970s, Indians filled the key leadership positions in the church.

Two conferences of Mennonites in India are associated with the Mennonite Church: the Mennonite Church in India (MCI) in the Dhamtari area of Madhya Pradesh, and the Bihar Mennonite Mandli (BMM) which was formed as an outreach of the MCI (then known as the American Mennonite Mission) in 1947. Though the two conferences are divided most clearly by their locations in different states, other differences mark the two groups as well. Members of MCI come from largely Hindu roots, while members of BMM come from tribal, animistic groups. Members of BMM are generally from lower castes and therefore lower economic positions than their southern neighbors.

Mennonite Church in India: There are about 3,000 members in 19 congregations in the Mennonite Church in India. A national delegate represented the MCI at a Mennonite World Conference assembly for the first time in 1948, marking the beginning of an era of increased participation by nationals in the direction of the church and the eventual and complete transfer of leadership. A new constitution, which took effect July 1, 1952, merged the mission and the church into one.

Today the MCI holds annual delegate meetings of representatives, and the ministries of the conference are carried out by educational and medical boards that run the various institutions of the church. The Mennonite Church in India has experienced two divisions, both of which centered around administrative disputes.

Bihar Mennonite Mandli: The Bihar Mennonites will celebrate the conference's 50th anniversary in January and will be joined by a tour group from MBM. There are 542 members in 14 congregations in the Bihar conference, located in Palamau and Ranchi districts. Good Books, with headquarters in Ranchi, is a chain of bookstores carrying religious literature and school books operated by Bihar Mennonite Mandli. The operation was founded by Paul and Esther Kniss, MBM workers in India since 1950.

The Bihar conference operates student hostels, a hospital in the Palamau district, and a service agency in Chandwa.

Valerie Weaver is assistant editor of Gospel Herald.

Angela Rempel

A gradual and sometimes painful transfer of power from North American missionaries to Indian Mennonites began in the late 1930s, when national leaders who wanted the power of self-determination began protesting the role of missionaries.

Mennonite Brethren Church

Connie Faber

The Mennonite Brethren Church in India "offers a glimpse of a church under disadvantageous circumstances that is growing and exploding," says Edmund Janzen, chair of the International Committee of Mennonite Brethren. "These churches live with poverty and suffering yet experience growth rates we can't match."

Early missionaries to India developed a strategy that is followed today: systematic village evangelism. In 1991, the India conference numbered 45,000 members, with 70 evangelists reaching 300 villages. Four years later, the conference had grown to 65,000 members, with 103 Indian couples evangelizing more than 500 unreached villages. The Mennonite Brethren churches are located primarily in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

"The vast majority of Indians are eagerly searching for more than life is currently offering them. Many Mennonite Brethren here know that," says Werner Kroeker, a North American liaison to the India conference. "They see it as a high privilege to share that God in Christ reconciles Indian people to himself."

Village preachers are extraordinarily committed, Werner adds. Some walk long distances from village to village; the fortunate ones ride bicycles to places where there is not a single Christian. They face strong resistance, threats and persecution. The evangelists are part of the Church Extension Workers program begun in 1979 and supported by the India Conference and Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services, the North American mission based in Fresno, Calif.

Evangelistic efforts: Recently North American volunteers have helped staff local evangelistic efforts. In 1995, Indians were teamed with volunteers for Church Partnership Evangelism campaigns in Hyderabad and Gadwal. More than 1,000 individuals indicated an interest in Christianity as a result of these two evangelistic endeavors.

India was the first and only foreign mission field of the Mennonite Brethren for 20 years, from 1899 to 1919. The denomination assumed ministry responsibility for a 300-square-mile section of the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Missionaries Abraham and Maria Friesen were sent from the Molotschna Colony in Russian Ukraine in 1890 to work with the American Baptists in evangelizing the Telegu people. Within seven years, 700 believers had been gathered.

In 1899, the first North American foreign missionaries, N.N. and Susie Hiebert and Elizabeth Neufeld, were also sent to India. Historians note that single women, particularly medical doctor Katharina Schellenberg, made significant contributions to the early work in India.

Mennonite Brethren missionaries worked with people from all castes. But early converts were from the outcaste community. Since developing an independent national church was a priority, schools were established to train a literate church membership. Over time, high-caste people were also converted and became active in evangelism, education and administration.

India was the first and only foreign mission field of the Mennonite Brethren for 20 years, from 1899 to 1919.

An early leader describes the mission work in India as one that used Jesus' model of teach, preach and heal. Bible schools and seminaries were established in the early 1900s to prepare national leaders for the growing number of churches. Clinics, hospitals and some social programs were established. Christian literature was printed and distributed and radio broadcasts helped spread God's Word.

Today these ministries, such as the official magazine of the conference, *Suvvarthamani*, are supported by the Mennonite Brethren churches of India. In 1996 the Mennonite Brethren Bible Institute of Shamshabad celebrated its 75th anniversary.

Present internal leadership conflicts have not hindered the growth of churches nor diminished their message to the broader Mennonite family. Edmund and Werner agree that the churches in India can teach North Americans much in the area of material possession.

"Not infrequently we watch someone give away something of which, in our opinion, they have too little," Werner says. "Living closer to the edge of necessity, as so many do, Indian prayers of both asking and receiving so often seem to ring true. … To us it seems that authenticity characterizes their faith."

Edmund describes the Mennonite Brethren church in India as vibrant, dynamic and eager to fellowship with others during the 1997 Mennonite World Conference.

Connie Faber is assistant editor of the Christian Leader.

Mennonites in India

United Missionary Church

Rich Preheim

While its parent body has left its Anabaptist heritage, the United Missionary Church in India has maintained its Mennonite affiliation and is one of the host churches for India 1997, the Mennonite World Conference assembly to be held in Calcutta Jan. 6-12. The church has its headquarters in Calcutta.

The United Missionary Church in India, known officially as Bharatiya Jukta Christo Prachar Mandli ("Indian United Christ Evangelistic Church"), grew out of mission efforts started shortly after the turn of the century by the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the Missionary Church Association. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ changed its name to the United Missionary Church in 1947, then merged with the Missionary Church Association in 1969 to form the Missionary Church, known in Canada as the Evangelical Missionary Church.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ, organized in 1883, had its first worker in India when Frances Matheson of Owen Sound, Ont., went to Bengal in the northeast part of the country in 1908, serving under the Methodist Episcopal Church. She transferred her efforts to her own church when the Mennonite Brethren in Christ organized its own sending body, the United Missionary Society, in 1921.

The first Missionary Church Association workers in India went in 1903 under the Christian and Missionary Church Alliance. The Missionary Church Association was founded in 1898 with many early leaders coming from Mennonite backgrounds.

Animists: The first United Missionary Society site was 200 miles west of Calcutta, working among Hindus and animists. By 1943 the church had 300 believers, and services were being held at five locations. Other mission efforts included education and medical work. In 1948 the United Missionary Society assumed the work of the Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association in India, which had been started in 1893 by a Brethren in Christ family.

The first United Missionary Church national annual conference in India was held in 1951. As trained Indians became available, the missionaries started to be replaced in the late 1950s and early '60s. By 1973, all missionaries were gone and the church was entirely under indigenous leadership.

The North American body, which does not have Mennonite World Conference membership, still financially supports the United Missionary Church of India and annually sends medical and evangelism teams to the country. According to 1994 Mennonite World Conference statistics, the United Missionary Church of India has about 4,500 members and 42 congregations, mostly in Calcutta and the state of West Bengal and the neighboring state

By 1973, *all missionaries were gone and the church was entirely under indigenous leadership.*

Hosts for India 1997

The six Mennonite World Conference-member churches in India have joined to form the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India. MCSFI and its member churches are hosting India 1997. MCSFI was created in 1963 at a consultation in Calcutta called by Orie Miller, former executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Since then, it has responded to victims of natural disasters and organized retreats and conferences.

In 1966, MCSFI organized the first all-India Mennonite peace conference, which included representatives of other historic peace churches in the country and the Fellowship of Reconciliation in India. MCSFI has also sent volunteers to Vietnam and Cambodia and school kits to Cambodia. MCC has been associated with MCSFI since its inception, working together in vocational training, disaster relief, International Visitor Exchange Program and Youth Discovery Teams. MCC provides some financial support.

of Bihar. The church has a goal of having 60 congregations by the year 2000. Work is done in five languages.

Ministries include the Calcutta Bible School, a Bible correspondence school with more than 80,000 students; a Bible institute; schools; camps and retreats, and a radio ministry. In addition to Mennonite World Conference, the church is a member of the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India and supports the Union Biblical Seminary at Pune, where many Indian Mennonite leaders receive their training.

Rich Preheim is associate editor of Mennonite Weekly Review.

रामलीला मैदान
जवाहर मार्ग
नई दिल्ली

Vic Reimer

Brethren in Christ

Harvey R. Sider

In 1914 the Brethren in Christ established its first mission in India, about 250 kilometers north of Calcutta. Saharsa, the government seat for the area, soon became the headquarters for the Brethren in Christ. For the first 40 years, missionaries concentrated their work in three mission stations: Saharsa, Madhipura and Supaul. Barjora eventually replaced Supaul, which was ravaged by the erratic Kosi River.

The primary effort of the early years was focused in service ministries, since direct evangelism among the staunchly Hindu and Muslim population was virtually fruitless. Hence orphanages, schools, hostels, dispensaries, care of widows, and by 1960 a hospital at Madhipura, were established. Land was purchased for a farm at Barjora in response to a time of famine.

The work in Saharsa District was almost entirely among Hindi-speaking people. Adult conversions were few in spite of colportage (religious book-peddling) work, preaching and literature distribution at "melas" (fairs). The church grew slowly through its service ministries on the three major compounds. Hence converts were clustered in Christian communities.

Expansion: By 1950 the missionaries began to focus on tribal groups living in the neighboring Purnea District, immediately to the east. A converted witch doctor from South Bihar was primary in reaching his own people, the Santals. Outreach began among two smaller tribal groups in the area, the Uraon and Munda tribes. In spite of persecution, growth was substantial enough to enable new Christians to live in their own villages and thus spread their faith by word and deed. Within two decades the tribal church was five times the size of the Bihari church.

By the mid-1960s, a number of Christian tribals had migrated to a neighboring area directly north, near Nepal, in search of available land. Thus the seeds for a tribal church were planted in a new area. Itinerant pastors from Purnea plus local lay leaders led the growing nucleus of Christians in Nepal.

> **_Within two decades the tribal church was five times the size of the Bihari church._**

By 1975, the baptized membership of the Bihar church numbered about 1,800 with a total Christian community nearing 4,000.

Transitions: Several significant changes took place between 1965 and 1974. There was an intentional transition from mission to church. The mission superintendent no longer chaired church councils or the executive board. The church was registered as a legal entity in the state of Bihar, and real estate was transferred to the church. The farm was sold. Indians managed institutions, except the hospital. The hospital came under the management of Emmanuel Hospital Association and was eventually directed and staffed by Indians. All overseas missionaries had returned to Canada or the United States by 1978.

New developments: By 1980, the Board for World Missions, in consultation with the Bihar church, began to focus attention on new outreach in Orissa. From the beginning, this has been led by Indians from Orissa. Growth has been fairly consistent over the past 10 years, with baptized membership approaching 800 in 24 congregations.

Meanwhile the ministry base in Nepal continues to strengthen. Significant progress has been made during the past three years with the return of two seminary-trained leaders to their own people. Additionally the political changes in the country and the newly formed Nepal Brethren in Christ Church have contributed to a new sense of identity and growth. There are nearly 350 baptized members in 10 congregations.

The membership of these three areas now exceeds 3,000, with a Christian community in excess of 5,000.

Harvey R. Sider is moderator of the Brethren in Christ Church. He and Erma, his wife, served for a number of years as missionaries in India.

'Strangers no more'

The hymn came alive for Mark Schaub as he worked with Indonesian Mennonites.

Pearl Sensenig

"I used to sing the hymn, 'For we are strangers no more ... part of one humanity,' but I couldn't feel connected with my Christian brothers and sisters worldwide because I had never experienced Christianity outside North America," says Mark Schaub.

All that has now changed for the young Kingston, Ont., native who spent last year on the island of Java, hosted by Indonesian Mennonites. Mark was one of 22 participants in SALT International, a one-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) service and learning program for young adults.

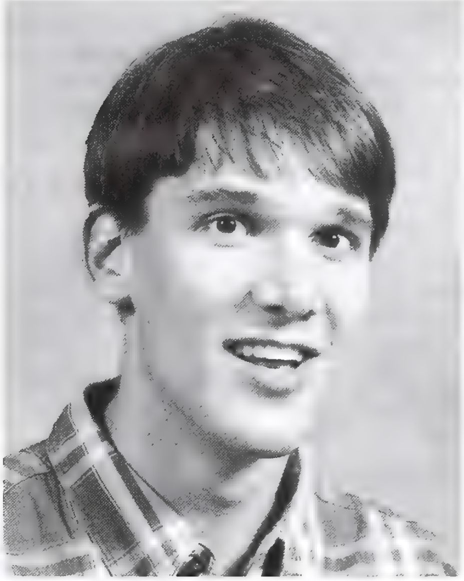
The Indonesian archipelago is home to some 67,000 Mennonites, the second largest group of Mennonites outside North America. One lesson Mark learned from Indonesian Mennonites is how to relate to Muslims, who make up about 90 percent of Indonesia's population.

Although Indonesia has an official policy of religious tolerance, tensions exist. As a tiny minority, Christians sometimes feel besieged in their overwhelmingly Muslim setting. In recent years Mennonites have had difficulty getting permission to build churches, and some Christians have been harassed.

Yet on a personal level many Christians and Muslims relate well with one another. Neighbors share food during important religious holidays. Some families include Muslim and Christian members. Some Mennonites themselves were formerly Muslims.

Through friendships Mark also learned to see beyond stereotypes. On some afternoons he sat on the porch strumming his guitar and singing with Totok, a young Muslim man who sought him out because he wanted to learn English. Totok became one of Mark's closest friends.

Mark's easy-going manner made him popular. He chuckled sympathetically with his students as they tried to wrap their tongues around unfamiliar English sounds, and he feasted with them on "swikee," a Javanese frog dish. In addition to teaching English, Mark helped with Mennonite youth vocal groups and other church music programs. Indonesian Mennonites are enthusiastic supporters of church exchange programs. Last year they hosted two other SALT International volunteers, as well as groups sent by other Mennonite agencies. Five young Indonesian Mennonites spent last year in North America as part of MCC's International Visitor Exchange Program.



Indonesian Mennonite leaders stress the importance of being viewed as equal partners in the global church, not as recipients of North American programs and money. They are eager to share what they have learned about living out their Christian faith. Indonesian Mennonite churches have a wide array of mission and social programs and run several hospitals and more than six schools.

Mark enjoyed living with Indonesian Mennonite families amid the breathtaking beauty of Java, an island dotted with smoking volcanoes, temple ruins and terraced rice fields. But Mark also observed how new industries, shopping centers and growing cities are changing life in Java. Many people are materially better off than before. In 1966 Indonesians earned an average of $75 U.S. per year; this year average income was expected to be $1,000.

But development has come at a price and has taken a heavy toll on the environment. In some towns, pedestrians wrap bandannas around their noses to avoid directly breathing the black smoke belched from diesel vehicles. Rivers are often clogged with plastic bags and other trash.

The gap between rich and poor Indonesians is so wide that Mark says they have "different realities." Some people buy designer clothing and reside in ornate houses ringed by tall fences, while others live in shacks and struggle to purchase daily rice for their families. Even among Mennonite church members, economic differences exist. Mark asks, "What is real development? Can it be measured solely by gross national product?"

> ***"What is real development? Can it be measured solely by gross national product?"***
>
> **Mark Schaub**

He thinks one answer may be small-scale development programs that help rural people increase their incomes. YPPS, the Indonesian Mennonite church development agency, has projects in impoverished villages where people have been left out of the economic boom. In one location, for example, YPPS workers taught villagers to modify traditional basket designs so their baskets can be sold for prices 10 times higher than before.

As Mark learns more about church work, the term "global Christianity" will be more than a catchphrase. It will bring to mind images of Indonesian Christian friends worshiping and witnessing in another part of the world.

Pearl Sensenig works for Mennonite Central Committee Information Services.

Our God the three-in-one

First in a three-part series on our Trinitarian faith

Darrell Fast

For many Christians, a belief in the Trinity is the touchstone for orthodoxy. For other Christians, it is out-of-date theology. For some people, the Trinity is a mathematical absurdity (1+1+1=3, not 1). And for still others, it is a nonissue. Does it really matter? Does a belief in the Trinity make any difference in the Christian life?

Our Christian belief in the Trinity is suggested in the Bible but not clearly developed in Scripture. There are only two references to the Trinity in the New Testament. One appears in the Great Commission in Matthew 28, where Jesus gives the command to make disciples among all the peoples in the world, and baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The other is Paul's concluding blessing in the Corinthian correspondence: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you" (2 Corinthians 13:13). That's about as explicit as the Bible gets.

Our Christian belief in the Trinity is rooted in the history of the post-apostolic church. As the early church reflected on this threefold reference to God, they felt that here was a description of their experience of life together. They began to comprehend that this experience of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit was a symbol of their uniqueness as a community of faith. The Apostles' Creed reflects this self-perception: "I believe in God the Father Almighty … I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son … I believe in the Holy Spirit. …"

This is why we say that our faith in the Trinity is historically rooted. It took time to develop, just like the canon of Scripture. A century or more after the Apostles' Creed came the Nicene Creed. Here no effort was spared to cross all the t's and dot all the i's in terms of the role of each person in the Trinity, and their relationship to each other. The rest, as we say, is history. But down through the centuries, this Trinitarian doctrine has been part of the distinctive foundation and identity of the Christian church.

A theological mystery: Our Christian belief in the Trinity is a theological mystery. It continues to challenge our comprehension. The Trinity does not make sense according to mathematical law. But God is greater than human rationality. A triune God presents us with the face of mystery. Here is a God beyond our comprehension. Or as Douglas Ottati in *The Christian Century* (Nov. 8, 1995, issue) puts it, "Trinitarian theology points to the God beyond our concept of God." It protects us from making our God into an idol.

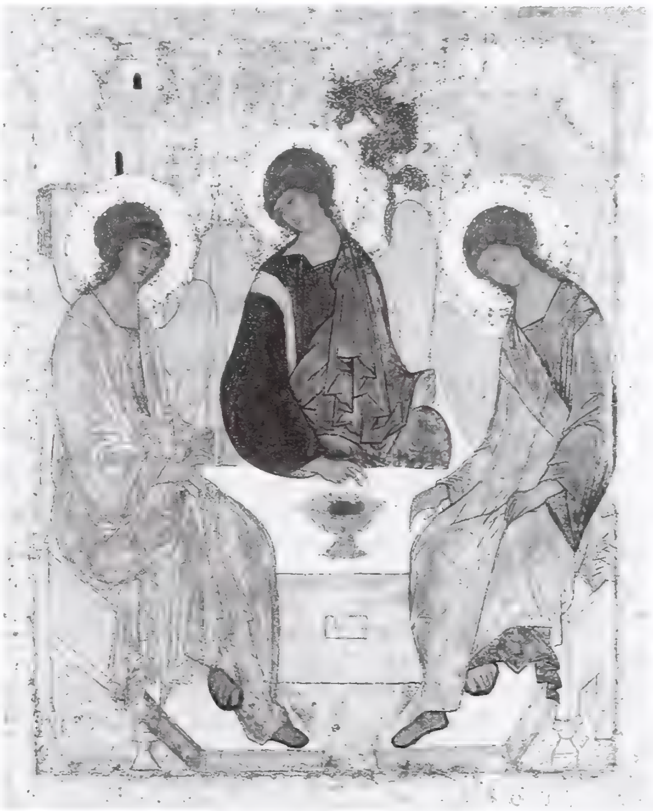
A triune God presents us with the face of mystery.

Down through the ages of Christian history, the Trinity has challenged some of the world's greatest minds to come up with metaphors to illustrate this mysterious truth. Augustine used the analogy of the three human faculties of reason, will and memory. St. Patrick picked a shamrock to communicate this truth about God to his Irish contemporaries. Recently I read that some scientists have become modern St. Patricks by using the chemical makeup of water to illustrate the Trinity (water remains the same chemically whether it is a gas, liquid or solid). Dorothy Sayers has drawn on her own career as an author to develop an analogy from the literary world. First there is the idea of a book, which is invisible although it lives in the author's mind. Then it is written down and printed so that it exists in the real world. Third, it generates power as it is read.

All these are mere attempts to illustrate a great truth that, Ottati says, is a supremely unpicturable doctrine. But here we have the theological challenge of faith seeking understanding. It is something like the challenge of climbing Mount Everest because it is there. Faith in a God who is three-in-one exercises both mind and heart.

The same might be said for our language about the Trinity. Ottati makes the point that Father, Son and Holy Spirit language should be respected because these names are biblical and engage the core of the early Christian communities. But we need not limit ourselves to these names alone. Our God is also Creator / Word / Spirit. Our God is greater than all the names used to describe this divine reality of God who is three-in-one.

Darrell Fast is pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., and moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.



"The Trinity" by Andrej Rublev (15th century)

News

Bethel honors native theologian

North Newton, Kan.—There seems to be no consensus among scholars, historians and theologians on what constitutes a "Mennonite," or even an "Anabaptist," theology. But most would agree on the name of the foremost Mennonite theologian of our day: Gordon D. Kaufman.

Bethel College welcomed this alumnus and native son for a symposium dedicated to his theology Nov. 3-4.

Kaufman, who now holds an endowed chair in theology at Harvard University, was born in Newton, Kan. His father, Edmund G. Kaufman, served as Bethel president 1932-1952.

Gordon graduated from Bethel in 1947, then went on to studies at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., and Yale and to teaching positions at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., and finally Harvard.

Kaufman was ordained as a minister and elder in the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) in 1953 and has been active for years in the Boston Area Mennonite Fellowship, including serving as its pastor. He has often said that his theology is deeply influenced by his Mennonite upbringing, particularly in its emphasis on the peace position and ethics (discipleship). Nevertheless, Mennonites have long regarded him with some skepticism.

Dale Schrag (Bethel College)

Gordon D. Kaufman

Alain Epp Weaver writes that his initial impression of Kaufman was that he was "a marginal, potentially heretical theologian." He blames this on a "stereotyped portrayal ... widespread among Mennonite communities in North America: namely, that Kaufman had strayed far from his Mennonite heritage [and] was contaminated by liberal Protestantism at Yale and then Harvard."

Epp Weaver, who was one of the presenters at the Kaufman symposium, is also the editor of a "Festschrift," a collection of essays in Kaufman's honor, entitled *Mennonite Theology in Face of Modernity*. The book's publication was celebrated during a banquet on the first evening of the symposium.

Epp Weaver attended a meeting of the American Academy of Religion in 1991, where he learned about another Festschrift for Kaufman that had just been published. He was disturbed to find that it included not a single Mennonite theologian. *Mennonite Theology in Face of Modernity* was his attempt to address that lack, he writes.

The book, which was published by Bethel College, also gave some impetus to the symposium, says Duane Friesen, Bethel professor of Bible and religion who chaired the event's planning committee. But the idea for it started independently, in conversation several years earlier between Friesen and his colleague Jim Juhnke, professor of history. Juhnke had been a student of Kaufman's at Vanderbilt, Friesen at Harvard.

At the time, Juhnke was finishing a book about Ed Kaufman (published in 1994). Gordon Kaufman had published a major theological work, *In Face of Mystery: A Constructive Theology*, in 1993, which was receiving "widespread recognition [in theological and academic circles] for its bold vision and significance," says Friesen.

The planning committee designed a symposium and solicited papers. Only when they had these and many logistical details in place could they apply for a grant from the Kansas Humanities Council. The proposal was accepted.

Friesen was pleased with the quality of papers that came in and with the way they fit together. His biggest disappointment, he says, was that there was not more diversity repre-

Inside the news

COE executive secretary resigns / p. 15

DGS looks at communications, finances / p. 15

Worker expects transformation in Northern Ireland / p. 16

Church stresses mission all year / p. 17

Information about India 1997, the Mennonite World Conference Assembly being held in Calcutta Jan. 6-12, 1997, is available on the Internet at http://www.mph.lm.com/mwc.html.

• • •

Puerto Rican Mennonites and Mennonite Disaster Service are helping clean up and rebuild ater Hurricane Hortense battered Puerto Rico on Sept. 10. MDS is looking for Spanish speakers with construction skills to help in the reconstruction project. Phone Carla Hunt at (717) 859-3889.

• • •

Paula and Nathan Zehr of Lowville, N.Y., broke the world record this year with a 1,061-pound pumpkin. Measuring 3 feet high (without stem) and 4.5 feet across, the pumpkin averaged 12 pounds of weight gain per day. The peak growth month was August, when the pumpkin put on 500 pounds. The Zehrs' secret: cultivating the vegetable more than five hours a day over a six-month period. The previous record weight for a pumpkin was 836 pounds. (*World Pumpkin Federation* and *The Wichita Eagle*)

sented among the speakers.

Only one woman, Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the GC Commission on Home Ministries, presented a paper, although Gayle Gerber Koontz, professor of theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., gave a formal response to the keynote address. "We tried hard to get more women on the program," Friesen says.

Close to 300 people attended some or all of the two-day symposium. It included the 1996 Menno Simons Lecture, given as the keynote address by Peter C. Hodgson, professor of theology at Vanderbilt; the banquet, at which Juhnke outlined the life of Hazel Dester Kaufman, Gordon's mother, who stayed in the shadow of her church leader husband most of her life; and 13 papers from professors and scholars in the fields of theology, religion, Bible, communication, psychology and philosophy.

In addition, Kaufman preached at Bethel College Mennonite Church on the Sunday morning before the symposium began and gave the final response, with a time for fielding questions, at the event's close.

"The issues and topics [of the symposium] are important for us to keep talking about,"says Keith Harder, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan. "The relationship of science and technology, such as in how we deal with end-of-life issues, and the environmental crisis, press on all of us. Contemporary theology [including Kaufman's] is speaking to these things."

Harder would like to see some kind of "ongoing conversation, as pastors, to keep working at translating philo-

continued on page 19

Jumping into the canning season

Tony Siemens

Mennonite Central Committee workers (from left) Mark Gingerich, New Paris, Ind.; Anthony Beery, Harrisonburg, Va., and Rudi Niessen, Asuncion, Paraguay, demonstrate the operation of the portable meat canner at an Oct. 17 commissioning service at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa.

The canner and crew left Akron Oct. 22 for their first stop in Middlefield, Ohio. They will travel to around 30 locations in 11 states over the next six months. With the help of local volunteers, using donated meat, the unit expects to process more than 230 tons of meat (mostly beef).

The current canner was constructed in 1993 and is the only portable meat-canning unit in the United States. Organizers are trying to secure permission for the canner to make its first-ever canning stop outside the United States, in Guelph, Ont., in mid-April.

During 50 years of operation, a succession of three MCC canners have processed nearly 8.7 million cans of beef, about 15 million pounds.

Bluffton (Ohio) College has made Barron's Best Buys in College Education for the fourth straight time. It is one of only five Ohio colleges and 300 in the United States to be listed.

• • •

The Bible department at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is offering sermon notes on the Advent lectionary texts on the AMBS World Wide Web site. Perry B. Yoder, Ben Ollenburger and Jacob Elias are writing notes for the Old Testament lessons and Willard Swartley and Mary H. Schertz for the New Testament. The web site address is http://members. aol.com/MennoSem/home.htm.

• • •

The 19th annual Mennonite Country Auction (Washington's version of the relief sale) was held Oct. 5 on the grounds of Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash., and raised $91,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. This set a record for the sale's gross receipts. A Pennsylvania Amish quilt was the top seller at $3,050. Eight poppy-seed rolls made by Lorene Stucky of McPherson, Kan., brought in $2,680. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

Bread for the World's annual report on hunger, unveiled at an Oct. 16 press conference in Washington, showed child poverty and hunger to be more widespread in the United States than in any other industrialized nation. In addition, the U.S. government does less than any other to pull its children out of poverty. About 20.8 percent (14.7 million) of the nation's children were poor in 1995, and about 13.6 million are hungry or at risk of hunger. (*Religion News Service*)

COE executive secretary resigns

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Norma J. Johnson, Newton, Kan., executive secretary for the Commission on Education and publisher of Faith & Life Press, has resigned effective Jan. 31, 1997. COE is part of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

She has accepted the position of associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., beginning March 1, 1997.

Johnson has served with COE since July 1987. "My work with COE has been challenging, rewarding and meaningful," she said. "I feel privileged to have learned to know so many of the people who are involved in Christian education in our congregations and area conferences."

Johnson

Her previous work included Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Kenya, Botswana and Akron, Pa. She has a master's degree in elementary education and a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

DGS looks at communications, finances

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Communication in a new denomination was a major focus for discussion when the Division of General Services) board met Oct. 18-19. DGS is a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

The board responded to a discussion paper about identity formation and communications structure in the integrated Mennonite denomination.

GC communications director David Linscheid, who wrote the paper, said it was not intended as a final proposal but as a way to elicit feedback.

Linscheid plans to share the paper with GC, Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) staff and boards, as well as the Integration Committee.

DGS passed a resolution asking the GC General Board to recommend that the Integration Committee and others involved in integration consider issues of denominational identity formation and communications at each point in integration discussion, beginning with a decision about the name of the denomination. DGS asked that this issue be dealt with in the near future.

DGS also learned that a combined MC, GC and CMC handbook is scheduled for the latter part of 1998.

Gary Franz, planned giving director, reported on his idea for a new position in church relations, with a fund-raising component. This employee would work on strengthening the General Conference's relationship with congregations. The General Conference will have to work hard "to transfer loyalty to the new denomination," said Franz.

New general secretary James Schrag, who attended the meeting, commented that this kind of position would be beneficial only if the churches already have a positive relationship with the denomination. The question, he said, should be, "Does the General Conference have the kind of relationship with member congregations that would welcome this initiative or be suspicious of it?"

The board made no decision on the position at this time.

Franz noted that as more money is being spent for local church programs, a smaller percentage is given to the General Conference.

"Is it a bad sign? I bring a strong congregational perspective. I don't necessarily take a dim view of the reallocation of resources. I think we should accept the trend and take a positive view of it, as well as understand its limits," said Schrag.

"We come with an assumption that growth means success, but how do we audit our faithfulness?" asked Larry Cornies, London, Ont.

In other action, DGS accepted the resignation of member Connie Hart-Yellowman, El Reno, Okla., affirmed her continuing work with Native Americans and recommended to the General Board a 3 percent cost of living increase for GC staff for the 1997 fiscal year.

Mennonite Central Committee celebrated 25 years of work with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Swaziland at a Sept. 28 gathering of MCC staff and Swazi partners in Mbane, Swaziland.

• • •

"Story Shaping Faith: The Power of Story in Ministry" is the theme of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's annual Pastors' Week, Jan. 27-31, 1997. Internationally known biblical storyteller John Shea will lead plenary sessions. For more information or to register, call Bev Sawatzky or Janeen Bertsche Johnson at 1-800-946-2627 or (219) 296-6207.

• • •

"Dead, Buried and Living in Hebron" is a new video available from Christian Peacemaker Teams that introduces viewers to the city at the center of much of the pain and controversy over the Middle East peace process, explores the nature of the conflict and outlines CPT's peacemaking efforts in Hebron. To rent or buy, contact CPT, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680-6508; phone/fax (312) 455-1199; e-mail cpt@igc.org.

• • •

At an Oct. 11 interfaith breakfast in Washington titled "A Call to End Violence Against Women," two women religious leaders shared their personal stories of domestic violence. One was Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, and the other was Riffat Hassan, Muslim studies professor at the University of Louisville. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno also spoke out of her 15 years of experience as district attorney in Dade County, Fla., and challenged churches to "bring more people into the effort to end such violence." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Sugar Creek Mennonite Church in Wayland, Iowa, will mark its 125th anniversary June 28-29, 1997.

• • •

The Mexico City Mennonite churches have begun a one-year course on conflict resolution. About 40 Mennonites from churches in Mexico City and Puebla and the churches' new Bible institute gathered in late August for the first of five seminars and committed themselves to become promoters of conflict resolution with their churches, families and friends. Mennonite Central Committee is sponsoring the project.

• • •

Two new organizations have been created to give women the "Promise Keepers experience." Heritage Keepers held its first conference Aug. 10 in Wichita, Kan. The organization is designed to "teach a woman how to be godly to her family, God and community." While Promise Keepers meetings feature only male speakers, Heritage Keepers will have both men and women, to avoid appearing "feminist." Another group, "Keys for Abundant Living: A Promise Keepers Counterpart," has held several meetings in Southern U.S. cities. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

More than 1,500 delegates, from Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia attended the first Balkan Evangelical Conference, held in Belgrade, Serbia, in September. Sponsored by the Serbian Evangelical Conference, the gathering was intended to give voice to the region's evangelical churches, promote their unity and affirm that peace and forgiveness for the region's peoples can only be found in Jesus Christ. Each delegate received a postcard-sized edition of Mennonite Central Committee's "A modest proposal for peace" poster, translated into Croatian and Serbian with help of MCC workers in the region.

Fire damages church where worker will serve

Elkhart, Ind. (COM/MBM/MCC)—Seven years after its sanctuary was damaged by a firebomb, a Methodist congregation situated on the dividing line between Catholic and Protestant communities in Belfast, Northern Ireland, lost its church hall in a Nov. 10 fire.

David Moser, the first joint worker in Europe for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) of the Mennonite Church, will leave Dec. 1 to serve a three-year term as assistant pastor of the congregation, the Springfield Road Methodist Church.

As the denomination's central mission in Belfast, the congregation saw its sanctuary sustain bomb and fire damage in a 1989 riot when Catholic youth threw a bomb into the building.

Christy Risser

David Moser

The latest fire will not affect a major remodeling program scheduled to begin in January and continue through August 1997, says Joe Campbell, joint program coordinator in Northern Ireland for MBM and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

"Security measures will have to be a priority for that building as it was suspected that kids from the local area broke into the church and started [the] fire," Campbell says.

John and Naomi Lederach, MCC workers whose home behind the church building also sits along the dividing line, heard what sounded like gunfire at 7:45 p.m. Nov. 10.

"It was, in fact, the roof tiles exploding in the intense heat," Campbell says. "The fire department was called and soon had the fire under control. But sadly, the hall was destroyed. The adjoining worship area suffered smoke and water damage but nearby houses were not damaged."

Moser will try to bridge several communities and types of ministry:

- pastoring the small, 25-member congregation ("They have stayed in an area that has been very violent," Moser says.);
- outreach to the surrounding inner-city neighborhood through use of the church's community center;
- attempts to bring reconciliation to Catholic and Protestant communities, largely through the efforts of an ecumenical community that will use the facility for mediation efforts.

The latter is "unique" in Northern Ireland's Christian circles, according to Moser. "Traditionally for evangelicals in Northern Ireland, you don't do evangelization work and reconciliation," he says. "We often forget that mission is not just about the transformation of others. It is also about our own transformation."

Moser described the change experienced by first-century Christians as they opened up what had been an exclusively Jewish faith to Gentile followers of Jesus.

"Peter went to Cornelius' house, and who was changed? Cornelius' household certainly was, but in the process the whole church was changed as well," Moser says. "In a situation like Springfield Road's, the church itself needs to remain true to its own identity, respectful of its neighbors on the other side of the street and open to be transformed by doing both mission and community work."

Moser engaged both dimensions of the gospel in his previous three-year assignment with MBM and MCC. These organizations (and now COM) work together in Northern Ireland, where efforts to bring reconciliation include political contacts between factional leaders and research into sectarianism and political conflict. From 1987 to 1990, Moser worked among inner-city Catholic and Protestant youth at Belfast's Saltshaker Center.

There Moser met Debbie Watters, a volunteer youth worker and native of Northern Ireland. They were married in November 1992 after an extended period of correspondence.

"Debbie is 29, grew up in Northern Ireland and has never known anything but 'the Troubles' [violence between

Catholics and Protestants] as long as she has lived," Moser says. "People who are working at these issues ..., even my wife, no longer fit in Northern Ireland. They are somewhere in between [the traditional Catholic and Protestant cultures]."

As Moser returns to Northern Ireland with support from his home congregation, First Mennonite Church of Berne, Ind. (see story below), he considers Mennonite efforts there repayment of a debt.

"Anabaptist Christians owe a lot to the Irish. They are the folks who carried Christianity to [continental] Europe and specifically to the areas where Anabaptism developed," Moser says."It's good we are going back to Ireland." *Tom Price*

Church stresses mission all year

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—For one Mennonite church, a consistent emphasis on mission—focusing "outward"—has brought "inward" benefits as well.

In 1954, a tradition began in Berne, Ind., in late November, when First Mennonite Church conducted its first mission festival.

"Although there had been Thanksgiving auctions in our church specifically for mission as early as 1905, the mission festival began as a dream of pastor Olin Krehbiel in 1954," says David Baumgartner, who grew up in the congregation.

"Since 1954, more than $3.2 million has been raised by the Berne congregation during fall mission festivals in an effort to partner with missionaries," Baumgartner says.

This year, the congregation hopes to raise $155,000 during a week in which it commissions several workers. One is David Moser, who will serve in Belfast, Northern Ireland under joint appointment by the General Conference Mennonite Church's Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). First Mennonite hopes to raise $15,000—all of COM's first-year support for Moser, who grew up in the church, where his parents still attend.

The Berne mission festivals comprise an intensive, one-week focus on a consistent theme in the congregation throughout the year.

"We have made it a regular part of our diet at church," Baumgartner says. "It can be very easy in an isolated town the size of Berne, around 3,000 people, to turn inward and think that our little world is indeed the whole world. The church leadership over the years has simply not allowed this to happen. Through our focus on mission we are able to see the power of God working in people throughout the world."

The third largest General Conference Mennonite Church congregation, with 1,071 members and an average of 653 people in Sunday worship, First Mennonite members have

- sent more than 100 people into long-term mission work since 1880; hundreds more have done short-term periods of service;
- "adopted" missionaries in Sunday school classes, providing financial and prayer support not accounted for in the annual budget;
- heard from more than 160 mission speakers;
- set up a rack with addressed, stamped air-mail envelopes to encourage the congregation to communicate with mission workers;
- conducted weekly times of prayer for mission workers, including a 24-hour vigil during the mission festival.

Mary Bauman, a 19-year veteran of mission work in India, now president of the church's Women in Mission group, says, "That is an important thing to those out in the mission field. Things happen in the lives of [workers] when there are people at home praying for you and that God's work will be done."

The church's commitment to mission also "continues to strengthen our congregational life in many ways," says Baumgartner.

"In the past, when there have been divisive issues that strained the unity of the church, mission has served as a theme around which we could all rally," he says. "Mission has been one of those common grounds that we all need in a congregation. It has been one of those glues needed to hold our church together with a common purpose." *Tom Price*

Goodfellow Rebecca Ingrams Pearson of London (the same folks who brought you insurance in case of attack by aliens) is now offering "Virgin Birth by Act of God" insurance. A claimant who proves impregnation by "Act of God" will be paid 1 million pounds. (*Christian Leader*)

• • •

The Mennonite historical societies of Saskatchewan and Canada presented Heritage Awards to Katherine Hooge of Saskatoon and Ted Regehr of Calgary at the Sept. 7 launching of Regehr's new book *Mennonites in Canada, Vol. 3*. Hooge was cited for "behind-the-scenes work" as a researcher and translator. In 1954, she was one of the first two women to attend the Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions, and in 1966 she was the first woman elected to the board of deacons at First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary offers seven short courses, including a study tour related to Mennonite World Conference, during the January 1997 interterm. Possibilities include "Christian Attitudes to War, Peace and Revolution" with Ted Koontz, "Theology of the Reformers" with H. Wayne Pipkin, and "Isaiah" with Ben Ollenburger (three-hour courses); "Christian Missions and World Religion—Islam" with J. Stanley Friesen, "Fostering Faith in the Family" with Nancy Nussbaum and "Marriage, Family and Pastoral Care" with Delores Friesen (two-hour courses). The study tour will be led by Walter Sawatsky and will include visits to Western Europe and the former Soviet Union. For further information, contact Andrew Kreider, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; 1-800-964-2627 or (219) 296-6207; e-mail goambs@aol.com.

Record

MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

Two Mennonite Central Committee U.S. adult education tutors were named "Outstanding Volunteers in Adult Education and Literacy" by the Kentucky Department of Adult Education and Literacy at an Oct. 18 ceremony at Hindman (Ky.) Settlement School. Anthony and Margaret Scola were MCC workers at the school 1994-96. Mike Mullins, school director, noted that no other agency had had workers receive the award three times (MCCers were honored in two previous years as well).

• • •

Village Life, the first online Christian news magazine, was launched Oct. 21 from Ellicott City, Md. Kaleidoscope Ministries, "provider" of *Village Life*, is an ecumenical nonprofit communications service with a goal of exploring the power of the Internet and its potential for the church. Executive director Jim Skillington, from the United Methodist Church, is thought to be the first ordained clergyperson appointed to a full-time Internet ministry by a mainstream denomination. *Village Life* can be accessed at http://www.villagelife.org.

• • •

On Sept. 20, the U.S. Department of Defense made public the Army intelligence manuals used from 1982 to 1991 at the School of the Americas (SOA), first located in Panama and then in Fort Benning, Ga. The release confirmed the contention of protesters against the SOA that the Pentagon has trained Latin American military personnel in techniques that included execution, torture and beatings. One of those convicted for the protests was JoAnne Lingle, a member of First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis, who served two months in prison earlier this year. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

MINISTERS

Verle Brubaker will be pastor at Calvary Church, Washington, Ill., beginning early 1997.

Heinz Janzen celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination Oct. 27.

Jonathan Lee is pastor at Peace Chinese Church, Richmond, B.C.

Roger Richer is pastor at Mountain View Church, Upland, Calif.

John Waltner has resigned as pastor at First Church, Halstead, Kan. He will begin as pastor at Evergreen Church, Seattle, in February 1997.

Corrections: Perry Bartel (not Terry Bartel) is assistant pastor at Coaldale (Alta). Church.

Ken Peters is not youth pastor at Eben-Ezer Church, Abbotsford, B.C. He is working with congregations in Burns Lake and Granisle, B.C.

WORKERS

Chris Blosser, Hesston (Kan.) Church, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as a research assistant with the Government Accountability Project in Seattle.

Victoria Buksbazen, Deer Park, N.Y., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 1 as a mediator and case manager with the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in Fresno, Calif.

Monica Claassen, Beatrice (Neb.) Church, began a two-year MVS term Oct. 28 with a children's ministry program in Chicago.

Karma Duerksen, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 1 as a teacher in Dallas, Texas.

Mary Ann Funk, Hague (Sask.) Church, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as an assistant teacher at the Friendship Day Care, Hutchinson, Kan.

Tamara Gerber, Blooming Glen (Pa.) Church, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 teaching English as a second language in St. Paul, Minn.

Dana Herr, Park View Church, Harrisonburg, Va., began an 11-month MVS term Sept. 4 as a youth counselor in Hutchinson, Kan.

Christopher and **Katherine Buss Hoving** began two-year MVS terms Oct. 1 in Richmond Heights, Mo. Katherine is a peace worker for the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, Christopher is a program assistant for the Missouri Coalition for the Environment.

Gretchen Kehrberg, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Newton, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 18 with the Washington Citizens for Resource

Blosser

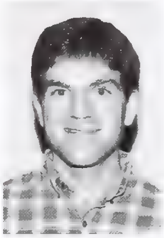
Buksbazen

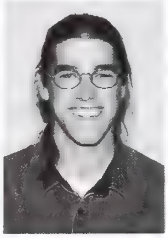
Claassen

Duerksen

Funk

Gerber


Herr


C. Hoving

K. Buss Hoving

Kehrberg

Morissette

Obold

A. Penner

V. Enns Penner

Peters

Shepley

A. Siemens

C. Siemens

Stanislaw

Stobbe

Zito

Conservation in Seattle.

Jolinn Morissette, Whitewater Church, Boissevain, Man., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as a child-care worker in Saskatoon.

Stephen Obold, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., began a two-year MVS term Nov. 15 as a legal assistant in Dallas, Texas.

Alfred and **Vernelle Enns Penner**, Douglas Church,Winnipeg, began one-year MVS terms Sept. 1 in St. Paul, Minn. Alfred is a carpenter supervisor for Habitat for Humanity, and Vernelle is a family advocate.

Lisa Peters, Winkler (Man.) Summerfelder Church, began a one-year MVS term Oct. 25 as a child-care worker in Saskatoon.

Nathan Shepley, Harrow (Ont.) Church, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 25 in Richmond Heights, Mo., as an assistant manager with Ploughsharing Crafts in St. Louis.

Andrea Siemens, Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., began a 14-month MVS term Oct. 10 as an administrative assistant in Dallas, Texas.

Christy Siemens, Boundary Community Church, Midway, B.C., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 29 in Richmond Heights, Mo., as a teacher's assistant.

Andrew Stanislaw, Bristol, Tenn., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 9 in St. Paul, Minn., working for Habitat for Humanity and the West Side Community Organization.

Angela Stobbe, Minnewasta Fellowship, Winkler, Man., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as an assistant teacher in Seattle.

Jennifer Zito, Westport, Ind., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 2 with Elderhealth in Seattle.

KAUFMAN *continued from page 14*

sophical theology into people's everyday lives."

Debbie Schmidt, pastor at First Mennonite Church of Hutchinson, Kan., agrees that the things on which the symposium focused are important to all Christians, not just academics. "[The symposium] felt worthwhile to me, but it raised the question of how you involve the congregation in the conversation," she says, "because it's in the congregation that theology becomes transformational for the church.

"Theological conversation can bring healing to a fractured church—we're almost divided into political camps, in a broad sense, not just Mennonite," she says. "In these kinds of theological discussions [as during the symposium], there is genuine dialogue between people who don't necessarily agree with each other.

"In the church today," says Schmidt, "we're so afraid [of each other and of change] that we hang on tightly to 'our theology.' Somehow we have to be able to convey what this symposium was saying, that theology is constructed from your individual situation or vantage point and we can loosen our grip without giving up our identity."
Melanie A. Zuercher

Tom Schaefer writes that according to George Barna's *Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators*, 31 percent of Americans regularly read the Bible, 44 percent believe Jesus sinned and 84 percent are at least partially ignorant of the Bible. Schaefer's interpretation of this data is that though the United States prides itself on being a religious nation, it is becoming more and more disconnected from the stories of the faith. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

● ● ●

The World Council of Churches faces expenses over income and a board mandate to balance its books for 1997. It will reduce its staff by 16 percent by the end of the year. According to general secretary Konrad Raiser, the reduction means the WCC will have one-third the staff it had in 1991, prior to a 20 percent reduction. Raiser blames the budget deficit on worldwide exchange rates against the Swiss franc and the fact that only 156 of WCC's member churches contributed funds to the WCC in 1995. (*Messenger*)

● ● ●

Evangelical Press reports that the "Confession by Computer" CD-ROM lets users pick from a list of 200 preprogrammed sins or enter their own. The program searches its database for an appropriate penance, displays the words to the "Our Father" or "Hail Mary" on the screen, then gives instructions for contacting a pastor on the Internet. The "Online with Jesus" CD offers more than 50 prayers, a rosary, a Catholic Mass and a Protestant church service, including a sermon that can be read or listened to. Germany's Roman Catholic Church has condemned "Confession by Computer," saying, "You cannot have sins forgiven by the push of a button." (*Christian Leader*)

Goshen College, a selective Mennonite liberal arts college of approximately 1,000 students, seeks an academic leader—a person of integrity and vision—for the position of **academic dean**. We seek expressions of interest and nominations of candidates with distinguished teaching and scholarly records, appropriate administrative experience and demonstrated leadership for a community that values both spiritual and intellectual vitality. Candidates must be able to articulate their religious beliefs and practices, demonstrate understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and its values and exhibit a history of involvement in a local church congregation.

The academic dean's most important task is to set the standard of excellence for both faculty and curriculum and to help faculty achieve their goals. Duties include administering outcomes assessment and faculty development programs and guiding a review of general education. The academic dean will also recommend to the provost the appointment of all teaching faculty members and all candidates for tenure and promotion. In addition, the dean supervises the libraries, oversees department chairs, faculty evaluation and orientation and advises the provost with respect to the academic budget. Expertise in the area of technology and/or experience in international education and service learning would be considered highly desirable.

The college, which celebrated its centennial year in 1994-95, is located in northern Indiana in a town of 24,000. Its most distinctive program, the Study-Service Term, a semester of immersion and service learning in a significantly different culture, has taken 5,664 students and more than 150 faculty to 15 developing countries since 1968.

Goshen College's student body includes students from 32 states and 35 countries. Approximately 67 percent are Mennonite and most others represent a variety of Christian groups. The college has balanced its budget for 57 consecutive years. In the last 12 years endowment has grown from $4 million to $56 million. The 135-acre main campus includes 19 buildings. In addition, the college manages a 1,150-acre nature preserve and educational center located between Goshen and Fort Wayne.

Deadlines: Applications and nominations taken until **Dec. 31**. Job will begin July 1, 1997.

Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send nominations, inquiries, and applications to: **Shirley H. Showalter, President-elect, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660; e-mail: shirleyhs@goshen.edu.**

Does your church get THE Mennonite?

If you collect at least five subscriptions from your congregation and send in the addresses and payment together, you can save money. Call our orderline for details: 1-800-757-5101.

Inorganic chemistry: Tenure-track faculty position to begin fall 1997. Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry required. Ability to teach a standard sophomore analytical chemistry course is also required.

Contact **Amy Tabler, Assistant to the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 West College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 1997, and continues until an appointment is made.

More information can be obtained from **www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac**. E-mail your request for an appointment application by sending your full name and mailing address to **chemistryvac@bluffton.edu**.

Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, a vibrant urban congregation of 100+ members seeks to fill a **full-time pastoral position**. Desired qualifications include: ordained seminary graduate with a minimum of three years of pastoral experience, demonstrable commitment to Anabaptist beliefs, and the ability to relate to people of a wide variety of cultures and lifestyles in an urban setting.

Send resume or direct MLI forms to: **Search Committee, Faith Mennonite Church, 2720 E. 22nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55406**.

Faculty position in special education. Ph.D. (or near completion) required. Areas of competence: curriculum and instruction, educational psychology with emphasis in at-risk students. Involves graduate and undergraduate teaching. Must have 3-5 years of teaching experience in public or private schools. Must be familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding.

Send letter of application, vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references by **Dec. 15** to **Dr. William Hawk, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801** or **e-mail dean@emu.edu**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

The **Waterloo Centre of Shalom Counselling Services** is seeking candidates for the **half-time position of executive director**, responsible for the day-to-day operation of the center. Duties include: supervision of staff; financial management; maintenance of professional standards for the center; carrying a limited caseload.

The successful candidate will possess the following: membership in a professional credentialing body such as CAPE, AAMFT, OCCSW; proven administrative skills; counseling and teaching capabilities; strong interpersonal skills; ability to relate well to churches and community agencies. The position is open April 16, 1997. Please forward resumes **before Nov. 30** to: **Search Committee, Timothy W. Thiessen, 187 Wentworth Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 3S3; (519) 576-0931; tthiess@sentex.net.**

Calvary Mennonite Church, Aurora, Ore., invites applications for **associate pastor**, a full-time position that will focus on worship and youth ministries. Starting date as soon as feasible.

Send resume and tape of ministry to **Palmer Becker, 6711 S. Lone Elder Road, Aurora, OR 97002; (503) 266-2202; PalmerBeck@aol.com**.

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor** to begin Feb. 3, 1997. Primary duties include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications for this 11-month position include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and resume, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7535; fax (219) 535-7609**; e-mail: **martyel@goshen.edu**; web site: **http://www.goshen.edu**. Application deadline: **Dec. 20**, or until the position is filled.Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Director of music: Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa. Position will coordinate diverse congregational music program; includes directing congregational choir(s), planning for worship music played and sung, development of vocal/instrumental gifts of congregation. Two-fifths-time position open immediately.

Contact **Joy Sawatzky at (215) 723-3088.**

Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz., is seeking a **pastor** to serve on its pastoral team. We are a congregation of 70-85 people with families, young adults and a few people over 50. We are an urban, Anabaptist community that is energetic and diverse. We are searching for a man or woman who is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition, enjoys preaching, teaching and administration, and could work as part of a team. Approximate 2/3-time position available with salary based on the Mennonite income guidelines.

Please contact **Pastoral Search Team, c/o Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, 6044 E. 30th St., Tucson, AZ 85711.**

Moving?

Let us know your new address six weeks ahead.

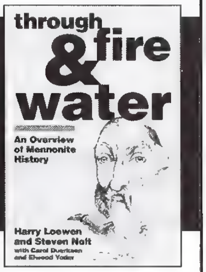
Ten Thousand Villages (formerly Self-Help Crafts), a program of Mennonite Central Committee, is seeking applicants for the position of **art director/graphic artist**, based in Akron, Pa. This two-year, full-time position is available on either a salaried, local service worker or service worker arrangement. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants should have a college degree in graphics/fine arts, experience with art direction, graphic design (Mac, Quark Express, pre-production), identity design systems and familiarity with Ten Thousand Villages program.

For more information contact **Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151.** Applications due **Nov. 29.**

THROUGH FIRE AND WATER

An Overview of Mennonite History

Harry Loewen and Steven Nolt


through
&
fire
water
An Overview of Mennonite History
Harry Loewen and Steven Nolt
with Carol Duerksen and Elwood Yoder

Reformers, self-styled prophets, teachers, preachers, and common folk come alive in this fast-paced history. *Through Fire and Water* is written in an accessible narrative style that gives an accurate look at Mennonites over the years. Includes stories, photos, maps, and cartoons.

Paper, 320 pages, $14.95; in Canada $21.50.

TO ORDER CALL:

1 800 245-7894.

hp%mph@mcimail.com

HERALD PRESS

MENNO-HOF PRESENTS:

J. C. WENGER STORY CORNER

Enjoy the classic story video that has delighted Menno-Hof visitors for years.

OUR MENNONITE LEGACY

John Ruth narrates Jan Gleysteen's epic account of our Anabaptist origin.

Give the gift of video to your family & church!!!

☐ J.C. WENGER: STORY CORNER	$19.95
☐ J.C: BAPTISM & CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE	$19.95
☐ J.C. WENGER: TOUGH ???'S ABOUT THE BIBLE	$19.95
☐ ENTIRE 5 VIDEO J.C. WENGER COLLECTION	$89.95
☐ PETER DYCK: INSPIRATIONAL STORIES	$19.95
☐ PETER DYCK: FAMILY STORIES	$19.95
☐ PETER DYCK: HUMOROUS STORIES	$19.95
☐ ENTIRE 3 VIDEO PETER DYCK COLLECTION	$49.95
☐ OUR MENNONITE LEGACY (GLEYSTEEN/RUTH)	$24.95

(U.S. Dollars; Indiana residents add 5% sales tax)

Send payment and $5 shipping & handling to:
Menno-Hof, Box 701, Shipshewana IN 46565
Phone: 219-768-4117 Fax: 219-768-4118

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE
Affiliated with the University of Waterloo
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6

DIRECTOR OF PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

Conrad Grebel College invites applications for the **Director of the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme (PACS)**, effective July 1, 1997. The Director is the chief administrator of PACS and the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies; responsibilities include teaching in the area of Peace and Conflict Studies and administering an international internship program. PhD preferred.

Conrad Grebel College is a Mennonite college on the campus of the University of Waterloo. The College administers the University's **Peace and Conflict Studies Programme**, which enrols some 400 students in PACS "core" courses (taught at Conrad Grebel College) every year, and additional students in 100 PACS "content" courses offered by the eight University of Waterloo departments participating in the interdisciplinary PACS programme. The College's **Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies** includes two resident agencies: **Project Ploughshares**, a national peace and justice organization, and **The Network: Interaction for Conflict Resolution**, a Canadian charitable organization that promotes and supports collaborative conflict resolution.

The successful candidate will demonstrate superior administrative, teaching, and research abilities and will have some practical experience in one or more of the program's areas of focus: conflict resolution; issues of war, peace, and justice; international justice/development issues.

Candidates should be sympathetic to the Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective of the College. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send letter of application and resumé, along with names and addresses of three referees, to: Hildi Froese Tiessen, Chair of the Selection Committee, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G6. **Closing date** for applications: December 1, 1996.

Reviews

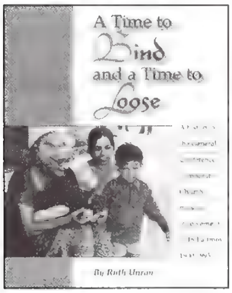
BOOKS

SOUP, SOAP AND SALVATION

A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose
by Ruth Unrau (Commission on Overseas Mission, 1996, 233 pages, $ 12 U.S./$17 Cdn., available from Faith & Life bookstores, or call 316-283-2210)

Reviewed by Susan Rhoades, Newton, Kan.

This is a splendid account of the contributions of many devoted missionaries who served the General Conference Mennonite Church in India over 95 years. For me, many memories came flooding back when, seven pages into the book, I saw the face of Pataitine, the first Christian in Champa, India, and "ayah" (nursemaid) to my mother, Mariam Penner Schmidt, a child of early India missionaries P.A. and Elizabeth Penner.



Those commissioned to go to India in 1900 experienced primitive conditions. Still, they were able to provide "soup, soap and salvation" to the leprosy patients at the first stations at Champa and Janjgir.

The book covers medical and education work as well as church-planting. The development of schools at the mission stations helped build and strengthen the church work in India. In the early years, "pocketknife surgery" was performed when emergencies called for it, so there was much jubilation when three doctors arrived at the beginning of the second quarter century.

Through poignant and humorous stories, Unrau tells about the missionary lifestyle—the tensions that developed through living and working so closely together, but also the loyalty and respect the workers had for one another.

When missionaries were asked what was the greatest sacrifice they made while serving in India, the answer was often, "Sending our children to boarding school." A number of missionaries lost small children to dysentery in those early years.

Indian partners are also included here. In two chapters titled "They, too, Heard the Call," the author offers biographies of a number of Indian converts who made significant contributions to the work, and of their offspring who continue to serve the church in India.

This book is a must-read for India 1997 conference attendees.

CARE FOR CREATION

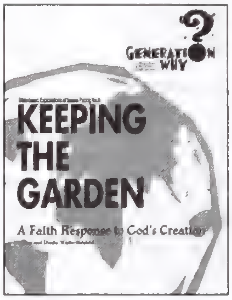
Keeping the Garden: A Faith Response to God's Creation *by Tim and Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 44 pages, $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Jocele Meyer, Fresno, Ohio

God, Creator of the world, said, "It is good." Caring for creation and repairing the degradation done by humankind are clearly outlined as faith issues in this book, another in the Generation Why series for youth relating biblical narrative to everyday issues of faith and life.

The authors explain the state of the environment and ensuing world problems in a way that challenges but doesn't overwhelm youth, and they give solutions appropriate to youth.

Keeping the Garden includes litanies, readers' theater and a variety of Bible study activities, with several options so that the most suitable for each group can be used. Leaders will need to be familiar with each session so they are well-versed in the Scripture background and can assemble needed materials. Each lesson includes a list of materials needed, the advance preparation necessary and suggestions for follow-up activities by individuals and the group.



I liked the combination of Scripture (based on selections from Genesis), facts concerning the state of the environment today and the well-organized, creative approach to presenting the material for each lesson. Care for creation is a timely topic that must be addressed by the church. This study is a way to begin.

This affirmation, found in five of the six sessions, summarizes the focus of this Bible study: "We care for the earth because: God made it; God owns it; God cares for it; God wills it; God speaks through it; God acts in it" (Shantilal Bhagat).

To help you with your
1997 Vacation Plans,

TOURMAGINATION
is pleased to announce...

Jamaica in Winter	Feb. 21 – 28
Celebrate Paraguay	Mar. 27 – April 7
Cities of the Apostle Paul	May 10 – 23
Highlights of China	May 21 – June 12
Spectacular Scandinavia and its Fjords	June 17 – July 1
Menno Simons European Sampler	July 7 – 24
Alaska, Yukon & Inside Passage Tour/Cruise	July 9 – 19
Berlin, Luther & the Mennonite Story in Poland	Sept. 12 – 26
Australia – New Zealand	Feb. 13 – Mar. 7/98

Call 1-800-565-0451 for more information

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Reg. #1567624

ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATE

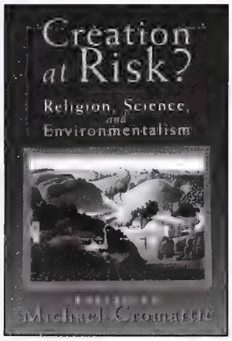
Creation at Risk? Religion, Science, and Environmentalism, *edited by Michael Cromartie (Eerdmans, 1995, 166 pages, $15 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Trevor George Hunsberger Bechtel, Chicago

The back cover of *Creation at Risk?* reads, "The Environmental movement both echoes and challenges traditional Judeo-Christian views about humankind's proper relationship to the natural world. Ten scholars and activists here explore—and clash over—some of the scientific, religious, moral, philosophical, economic and political claims advanced by contemporary environmentalists."

In this book, which originated from a 1994 conference, Cromartie hopes to "clear up some confusion, encourage constructive thinking on both sides of the political divide and help to raise the level of debate."

For those of us interested in the environment from other sides of the debate, this book does that. Topics—the ideology of environmentalism, global warming, environmental legislation, biocentrism and the success of economic markets in dealing with ecological problems—are addressed with a paper, a response and inclusion of discussion from the original conference. This allows for diverse perspectives on the issues at hand. I am neither a scientist nor an economist, so I found the diversity of ideas presented here helpful.



If the book has a weakness, it lies in the lack of religious perspective brought to bear on the issues. With the exception of Thomas Derr's article on the theological implications of biocentrism, the focus is mostly scientific and economic.

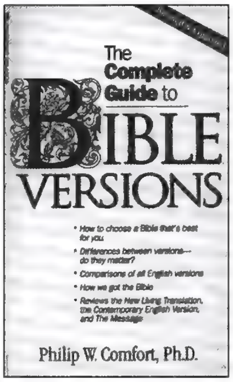
However, as an introduction to some of the scientific and economic issues environmentalism raises, the book succeeds. It is well-written, if academic, and the issues it deals with are current and important. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in the environment.

CHOOSING A BIBLE

The Complete Guide to Bible Versions, *by Philip W. Comfort (Tyndale House, 1996, 157 pages, $4.99 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Lois Nickel, Winnipeg

When you enter a bookstore to search for a new Bible, you will be happy to have at least skimmed through this small paperback. In 157 short pages, Comfort covers important details on the latest translations and revisions of older translations—including the purpose of each translation, which Greek or Hebrew text it is based upon and some of the processes used in producing it. This information is a wonderful reference for someone wanting to buy or read a new Bible.



Although reading through the history of the Old and New Testaments and of the English-language Bible can be technical and tedious, if the reader has never before been exposed to such facts, this section is also helpful. The history provides the reasons for translation and the known manuscript information that becomes the basis for all translation.

If you wonder what difference various translations really make anyway, Comfort answers this question, too. He does this by quoting John 1:1-18 verse by verse in five or six translations and discussing the differences that may or may not be evident to the average reader. This example is his "hands-on" way of showing the importance of knowing which translation would best serve the reader's purpose.

Comfort has a high view of the Bible in the sense that he gives God's inspiring touch much credit compared to the human creative incentive. Although Comfort does discuss the NRSV's attempt to be gender-inclusive, such language for humankind is painfully absent throughout his book. He also neglects to review any of the new "inclusive God-language" versions.

The next time I want to purchase a new Bible or am wondering which version to use for a particular study or worship purpose, I will do a quick referral to Comfort's listings, to give me a head start on some of the details that will influence my choice.

Resources

- **Faces at the Manger** by J. Barrie Shepherd (Upper Room, $12.95 U.S.) examines the reactions to Christ's birth of Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, angels, King Herod and present-day people.
- **An Advent Journey: Preparing the Way of the Lord** by Larry R. Kalajainen (Upper Room, $8.95 U.S.) is a four-week study workbook giving daily readings for Advent that focus on the Gospels.
- **Prepare Ye for a New Advent of God's Love in Our World** by John and Adrienne Carr (Upper Room, $6.95 U.S. for leader's guide, $4.95 participant's notebook) helps small groups and those on retreat consider ways of rejuvenating holiday celebrations.
- **The Practical Dreamer and Other Stories to Tell at Christmas** by Richard P. Olson (Upper Room, $8.95 U.S.) looks through the eyes of those touched by Christ's birth.
- **Parenting the Prodigal** by S. Rutherford McDill Jr. (Herald Press, 1996, $7.95 U.S./$11.35 Cdn.) offers support to parents and information on dynamics that can help or hinder parenting rebellious children.
- **The Astonished Heart: Reclaiming the Good News from the Lost-and-Found of Church History** by Robert Farrar Capon (Eerdmans, 1996, $12 U.S.) says the institutional church has focused more on requirements and restrictions than on the Good News and needs to recover astonishment.
- **Renewing American Compassion: How Compassion for the Needy Can Turn Ordinary Citizens Into Heroes** by Marvin Olasky (The Free Press, 1996, $21 U.S.) claims Christians can fight poverty through a renewal of individual faith-based charity.

*************CAR-RT SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 515 RRR
Library CRD
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Speaking the language

... this is how you use language
to know what you can never possess.
Julia Kasdorf, "Learning the Names"

A classic introvert, I confess that group activities are not my favorite. After three years as a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, however, I had become comfortable enough, I thought, with small-class seminar settings to participate in most discussions.

This fall I'm taking a seminar, through the Great Plains Seminary Education Program, on the theology of Gordon Kaufman. I sit in my seat, silent, week after week, listening to everyone else talk. I tell my friends, "I just don't speak the language."

How's that? Theology is the process of figuring out how God affects the relationship between humans and the world. Rich Preheim, associate editor of *Mennonite Weekly Review*, wrote in the Nov. 7 issue of that paper that when you try to answer questions like why the innocent suffer and does God answer prayer, that's doing theology. Theology, from Greek for "God" and "word," is "God-talk." For Christians, theology should be our native tongue—right?

> ***Theology has become an academic discipline with its own codes and jargon that only the specialists seem to comprehend.***

Yet for most of us it is not. Whatever theology was intended to be, it has by now become an academic discipline with its own codes and jargon that only the specialists seem to comprehend. Although I understood most of the words I heard at the Kaufman symposium at Bethel College (see page 13), I only seemed to connect with the presenters who used the clearest, most concrete images rather than abstract concepts.

The speakers I best understood were those who had served in pastoral ministry. Debbie Schmidt, a pastor, recognized that her attendance at the symposium and her own wrestling with the difficult language "raised the question of how [pastors] involve the congregation in the [theological] conversation, because it's in the congregation that theology becomes transformational for the church."

Years ago I taught English-speaking, Appalachian adults to read. I worked to find (and later I wrote) reading material that resonated with their lives (a lot of the standardized stuff, set in an urban context of buses and subways, corner fruit stands and racially mixed neighborhoods, did not). That is where I first saw the transformational power of language—in the eyes of people who understood that what had once been gibberish on paper could tell their stories and make them into something that touched others. It has also made me sensitive to the ways we "educated" use language to shut people out.

Right-brain: That is where the arts must intersect with more academic, "left-brain" disciplines like theology. A professor told me once that I was right-brain—meaning, I think, that I need to *see* in order to understand. I crave the crisp images conjured by the poets—those who write, sometimes those who speak or sing what they write—and novelists and painters and photographers and quilters, in order to draw circles big enough to make sense of life. The prophets did this with word-visions of watered gardens and fiery destruction, the psalmists with psalms of rejoicing and lament, Jesus with parables.

Julia Kasdorf, a poet and a Mennonite, in 13 words goes to the heart of the tension with language: that we use it both to make sense of what is beyond our comprehension and to try to control, by making language exclusive, what ultimately is out of our control.

Gordon Kaufman, a Mennonite with a voice as deep and warm as a symphony and lines around his eyes that tell of joy and sorrow, is, in his way, a poet as well. His name for God is "Mystery." Maybe it's the best word we Western English-speakers have for something we can never possess but which, in the knowledge that comes through worship and service, can nonetheless transform our lives.

And maybe it's a poem or a painting, our own or someone else's, that will at last allow us to "speak the language."
Melanie A. Zuercher

Recyclable

Inside

The Christ of faith in the Jesus of history / p. 10

Christian shareholders have a voice / p. 12

Consultation on military membership / p. 13

$2.00

THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 23
DECEMBER 10, 1996

- The Table of Mary (page 3)
- The real meaning of Christmas (page 6)
- Christmas during sad times (page 8)
- Songs of suffering and anticipation (page 9)

WELCOME THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

Prologue

Happy new year! If that sounds strange to us in early December, it is because we are more accustomed to our secular calendar than to the church calendar.

Dec. 1 marks the beginning of Advent, when we actively anticipate the coming of Christ among us. This issue helps us do that by looking at Jesus' coming from a variety of angles.

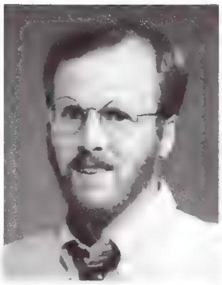
Maren Tyedmers Hange, who works with Mennonite Central Committee in Syria, reveals a custom she has encountered among Muslim women there that has much to teach us about hospitality (page 3).

Poets can help us look at Jesus' birth with new eyes. The poems on page 5 give us such images.

Mel Friesen uses the title "The Real Meaning of Christmas" yet argues that we cannot fully capture that meaning (page 6).

Christmas often involves giving to others who have little. Walter Bergen tells a story from Russia of such giving (page 7).

While advertised as a joyous time, Christmas is often sad for many people, as Margaret Houk reminds us (page 8).



Larry Penner, former assistant editor of *The Mennonite*, offers lessons from our hymnal's Advent songs to help us prepare for Christ's coming (page 9).

Darrell Fast continues his series on the Trinity (page 10), and J.B. Miller offers advice for Christian shareholders (page 12).

Keep awake! *gh*

Next issue: Abandonment of the elderly

Cover: Photo by Religious News Service

Contents

FEATURES

3 The Table of Mary

Lessons of love and hospitality from Muslim women

5 Can you believe it?

5 down to earth

6 The real meaning of Christmas

The search for new meanings

8 Christmas during sad times

Christ brings healing to our miseries.

9 Songs of suffering and anticipation

The hymns of Advent help us anticipate the coming of Christ.

DEPARTMENTS

10 Letters

10 Bible

12 Fiscal health

13 News

18 Record

22 Reviews

23 Resources

24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Periodical postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General Conference Mennonite Church

"The Light Still Shines" by Jean Luvwezo (World Literacy and Christian Literature)

Lessons of love and hospitality from Muslim women

The Table of Mary

Maren Tyedmers Hange

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn (Luke 2:7). Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining (1 Peter 4:8-9).

As I came into the hallway of a modern apartment building in Aleppo, Syria, as many smiling women as were able to get their heads through the narrow doorway greeted me. "Ahlan wa sahlan" (welcome), they said as they invited me inside. Four generations of women were gathered. They came from one extended family to celebrate a new mother among them who had given birth the day before. This celebration for each new mother is part of Muslim tradition, a feast called "The Table of Mary." It is held in memory of Mary, the mother of Jesus, so that "no woman would feel alone again at the time around childbirth."

Could we in the West with our scattered families learn to reach out to the homeless and isolated mothers around us?

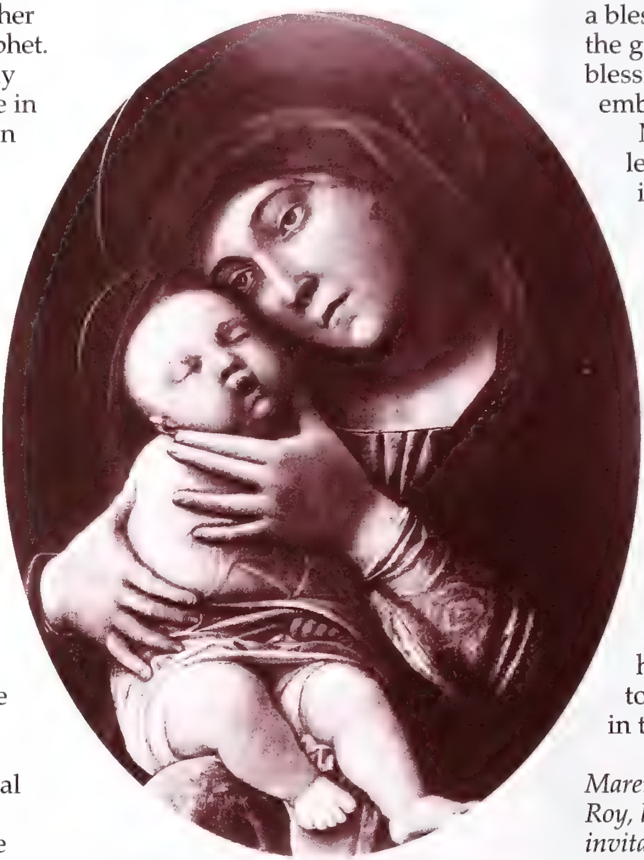
I was the stranger, the newcomer, warmly welcomed to join in their traditional celebration of this event. The women opened the circle to me despite language, cultural and religious differences. Like Jesus, who overstepped boundaries, these women and I overstepped boundaries that separated us. For these women were Muslim, celebrating in memory of Mary the mother of Jesus, whom they honor as a prophet.

Mary gave birth to Jesus far away from family and friends while here in Aleppo, four generations of women from her family surrounded this woman. Mary's refuge was the cold, unwelcoming stable. This woman was surrounded by her support system, the women of her extended family, in her home. Mary experienced the bare minimum, while here the tables were loaded with food. Mary put Jesus in the manger in swaddling clothes; this woman and child were propped up in their finest clothes. Mary celebrated with strange shepherds and foreign wise men, while here laughter and joyful blessings from a close-knit family filled the room.

The chatter and laughter of more than 30 women echoed as some called out short blessings, and all women joined in making the typical cry of joy that I think only Arab women know how to make. These women freely included me, and I shared my joy and smiled with them.

To my great relief a young woman arrived not long after me, sent by the Sheik (a religious leader) to be my translator. She had dropped everything, given her two little sons to her her husband and come. So our communication could now go beyond mere smiles and "mabruks" (congratulations).

Food, dance and song: When the food was ready, these women invited me to their table. The table was loaded with Arab specialties, salads, finger foods and sweets, a feast with many colors and tastes. It was a feast not only for the stomach but also for the eye, a feast that can last for hours with food, dance and song all freely flowing in the spirit of joy. After the traditional cup of Arabic coffee that ends a visit, I left feeling blessed.



"Madonna and Child" by Andrea Mantegna (RNS)

This celebration took place in a spirit of love and joy: as a blessing for the mother, giver of life; as a blessing for the new life, the hope of the family; as a blessing for each other as women, the gathered community, and as a blessing for me, the welcomed and embraced stranger.

Maybe we Western Christians can learn something from this tradition in memory of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Could we in the West with our scattered families learn to reach out to the homeless and isolated mothers around us? Might our churches be family for each other on these occasions through similar rituals? Can we use this opportunity to celebrate life and creation in a new way? Or perhaps it does not fit our Western thinking and we only read this as another story.

Whatever our choice, may the spirit of love and joy, of hospitality and celebration lead us to say: May there always be room in the inn.

Maren Tyedmers Hange and her husband, Roy, live in Damascus, Syria, at the invitation of the Syrian Orthodox Church. They are country representatives for Mennonite Central Committee, trying to build bridges between Christians in the West and East, between Muslims and Christians. This article is reprinted from Window to Mission, *Winter 1995.*

Can you believe it?

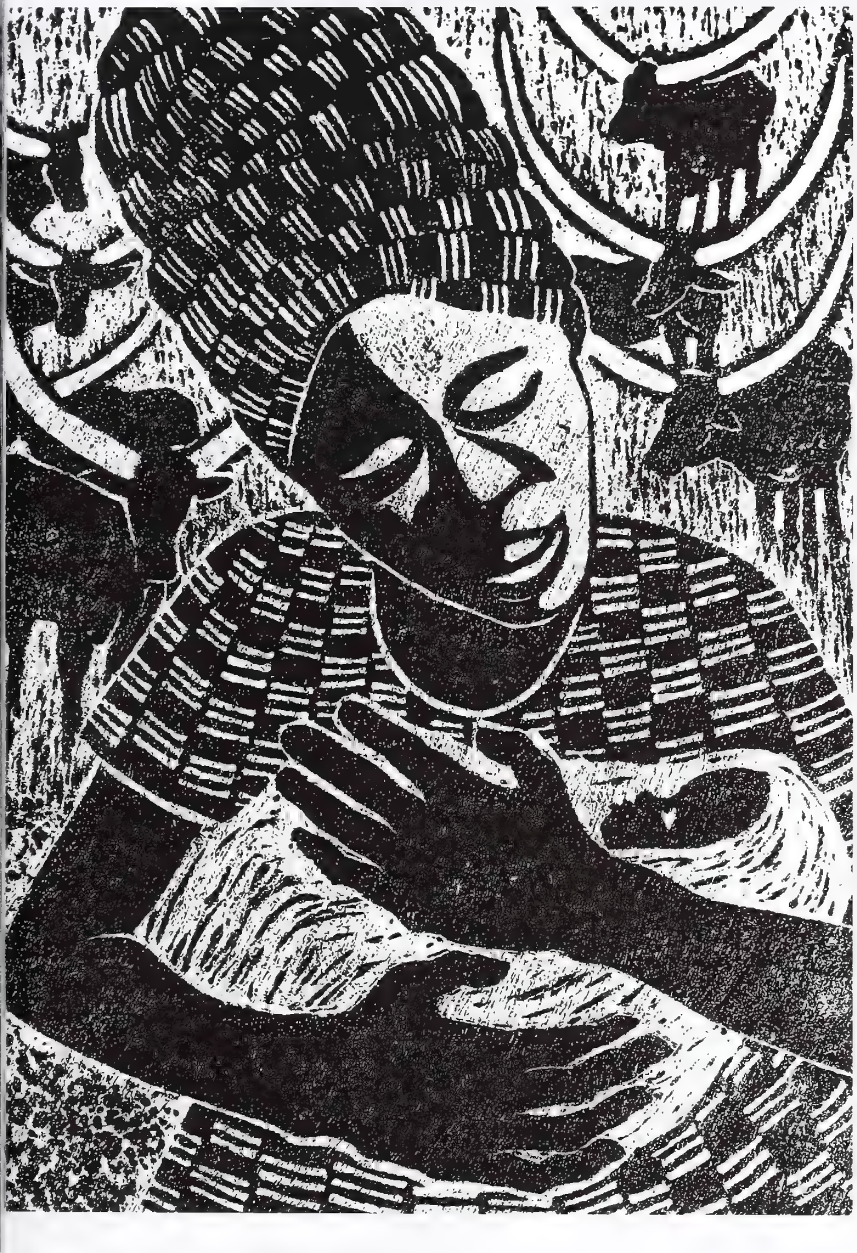
Fern Pankratz Ruth

Can you believe it?
Stars and snowflakes falling from
The same night sky?
Ice and fire heralding
A mewling cry?
Sweaty cattle genuflecting
Far from human eye?

Can you believe it?
God's love come a-birthing down
From heaven's vast milieu?
Reconciling humanness
With a celestial view?
An infant carrying the key
To Paradise?

I do.

Fern Pankratz Ruth is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.


Gard Okello

down to earth

Menno Wiebe

faith roots dangling in the atmosphere
washed free from any clinging earth
it hovers
a Christianity of the sky
no earth aroma to inhale
an evaporated God
white worlds leaving
await Christmas
that will once again
lay Jesus in our murky world

Menno Wiebe lives in Winnipeg.

The real meaning of Christmas

The search continues each year for new meanings of God's Word becoming flesh.

Christmas is the story of salvation from oppression, deliverance from evil, power for today and hope for the future, yet these words are all too small to contain the fullness of the real meaning.

Mel D. Friesen

When I was a pastor I promised myself I would never preach a sermon entitled "The Real Meaning of Christmas." My promise grew during two years of living in another country, living in the midst of people who spoke another language, relating to people whom I had only known for a few months.

The season vibrated with all the spiritual and secular elements of Christmas. I worshiped with the American community. I sang the familiar songs, but their words and melody rang hollow. I heard the Christmas story, but the words fell flat. I saw Nativity scenes, but they seemed so artificial. I saw decorated pine trees and snowy Santas, but they looked out of place in the 90-degree tropical heat. I exchanged gifts with the people I knew, but they felt devoid of spirit.

Troubled by this void, I wondered, What is the real meaning of Christmas? One day I read Hemingway: "You do not know what Christmas is until you lose it in a foreign land." I realized that the meaning of Christmas is rooted in the gathering of family and in familiar traditions. After my divorce I again evaluated the meaning of Christmas for my life.

I often hear people say Christmas is a children's holiday. But I believe they mean children as experienced by their parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. Seldom does anyone imagine a child alone at Christmas. Nor do we imagine a child opening gifts when no one else is in the house, let alone imagining a child with no gifts. Our image is of a child by the tree opening gifts as the family watches and a child eating the Christmas meal as the family gathers round. Our pictorial image of Christmas is a child in the middle of the picture surrounded by family and traditions.

Uncomfortable discourse: When someone is intent on telling me "the real meaning of Christmas," I usually brace myself, expecting an uncomfortable discourse. Such messages are often delivered in a condescending manner that leaves me feeling guilty and inadequate. Seldom do I hear good tidings of great joy from someone so determined to tell me the real meaning. More often than not, I hear sentences footnoted with Bible verses but filtered through the limited experience of that person's life. Surely there are Christmas meanings beyond what one person can experience, let alone be able to verbalize.

A part of the meaning of Christmas lies in the miracle of incarnation. An event so filled with awe that the "Hallelujah Chorus," "Ave Maria" and "Jesus Loves Me"—all sung by a choir of angels—are but an introduction. Christmas is the story of salvation from oppression, deliverance from evil, power for today and hope for the future, yet these words are all too small to contain the fullness of the real meaning.

A part of the meaning of Christmas is the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us. The presence of God's Spirit in the midst of people whose love has been and continues to be a living expression of steadfast compassion and care. The original Word became flesh in the midst of a family. The Word was not an orphan dropped out of the sky but born to parents with a genealogy, parents who happened to be away from home, parents who stood watch over the fragile baby surrounded by inclement winter weather and unsanitary barnyard conditions, parents who protected this most fragile form of life from the principalities and powers of Herod and the Roman Empire.

We owe much to this family. At a minimum it is appropriate to call them holy. Today the Holy Spirit still gives us the miracle of the Word becoming flesh. It happens when two or three are gathered in the name of God. However, seeing Christmas from the role of the family is too small.

When I hear someone wanting to tell me the real meaning of Christmas I want to tell them, Unless you have spent Christmas alone in a place you don't want to be, I have a hard time hearing the words you tell me. I believe in the theological meaning of Christmas, but I have to confess in my heart that the holiday finds much of its meaning in family and friends. If anyone thinks they can tell me in 30 minutes or less the fullness of the real meaning of Christmas, I wonder how much of the meaning they understand.

Every year, however, I live in anticipation, like Simeon and Anna, hoping that this year the real meaning of Christmas will be revealed to me. Until that happens, you are always welcome to be with me, showing me through a living example the meaning of peace on earth and goodwill to all, the meaning of where two or three are gathered in my name, the meaning of now is the dwelling of God with all people, the meaning of walking in the Spirit. By showing me, I believe my eyes and ears will see and hear new meanings of God's Word becoming flesh.

Mel D. Friesen lives in Goshen, Ind.

A little love in a dark corner

Walter Bergen

The Arbat is a neighborhood in west central Moscow where many pensioners live. They are ignored by state-sponsored medical authorities, who demand bribes. They are vulnerable to petty criminals and are often discouraged by the changes around them.

SALUS is a small nongovernmental agency working to help pensioners in the area. They have a service where they try to help immobile pensioners get groceries at discounted prices through cooperative managers at local stores. They do advocacy and try to support the many pensioners who exist on pensions worth about $30 a month. Most of the active workers are Russian Orthodox believers.

In 1995, Andre Khvostov, the executive secretary for the Society for Dissemination of Holy Scripture, proposed that a small supplement of groceries, a chocolate bar and a small cake be put together for pensioners in the Arbat area through SALUS. He recommended SALUS as a reputable organization. Some of the packages were put together and distributed with the help of theology students from the Orthodox University.

Approximately 1,500 Christmas gifts consisting of grocery items (e.g., spaghetti), a cake and a small chocolate bar were assembled (within a stone's throw of a McDonald's) and distributed.

Jonathan Seiling (Service Education Program participant from Elora, Ont., and a student at Conrad Grebel College) and I went with Alova Vladimirovna and Viatslav Vladimirka to visit three groups of pensioners. They were unable to leave their apartments and were grateful for the gifts. One pensioner said, "If Alova Vladimirovna didn't care about us, we would die." Then she bowed to Alova, folding her hands in front of her forehead as a sign of respect.

They recounted how in the ice and snow of Moscow's winter they can't walk on the street. They are afraid of ruffians stealing what little they have or doing even worse things. Homeless people sleep in the entranceways of buildings.

One elderly woman led Jonathan to her room, showed him her room with a phone and said, "I never get to go outside. This is my life." Then she burst into tears.

It is hard to put into words either the feelings of gratefulness we felt that brothers and sisters in Canada made these acts of kindness possible or the anger and frustration we feel toward the Russian government, which has money to throw away on a senseless conflict in the Caucases but not the will or the decency to care for its own elderly.

Here in the midst of this confusion, Russian Orthodox and Mennonite believers cooperated to bring a little love into a dark corner of the world.

Walter and Janet Bergen served in the former Soviet Union with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Central Committee 1993-96 and currently live in Abbotsford, B.C.

Christ came to bring healing to our miseries.

Christmas during sad times

Margaret Houk

The holidays are approaching. Are you sad because things are not well within your family, or at least not the way you would like them to be?

The songs, the upbeat dramas on TV and the heartwarming family reunions depicted by the news media can be depressing if your family life has been scarred by divorce, serious illness or a recent job layoff. You may feel depressed if your problem is less dramatic but nonetheless disheartening—a bad argument between you and your spouse or friend, friction with your co-workers or teenager, a move to a new community or feeling lonely.

If you find yourself in these or similar scenes, you are not alone. In fact you are probably in the majority. "They lived happily ever after" is fairy tale stuff. Rarely does real life flow so smoothly.

One recent Christmas was an especially difficult one for several acquaintances of mine. A close friend was in the midst of a serious, depressive illness. She and her husband had to limit their holiday activities to one short visit with only a few family members present. In another family a son had left home under difficult circumstances, which weighed heavily on the hearts of his parents and cast a pall on their holiday spirit.

Our neighbor's daughter suffered a serious financial setback just before the holidays when her late-model car, just past its warranty, lost its engine. It cost her $1,900 and took six weeks to put the car back into service. In our own family on Christmas morning we received a distressing phone call. A niece, the mother of three young children, had just entered the hospital with severe abdominal pain, the complications of an infection.

Evil: Can Christmas be a happy occasion when such disasters occur? I think not, but it can be something else. It can be the most meaningful Christmas of our lives, for the Christ of Christmas did not come to earth because people are happy. He came precisely because that is not the case. Christ came because evil, misfortune and human hurts are a part of all our lives.

Christ came to do something about the human miseries we all wish were not there, to be a source of strength for us in dealing with problems.

The peace, the joy and the goodwill we hear about through the Christmas season are not things intended for us to put on temporarily like coats but are a promise—the promise of hope for a better tomorrow. The promise of God's help, of renewed courage for today. The promise of gifts that will last longer than the ones under the tree—gifts that, when found, will last not only through the new year but for the rest of our lives and even beyond the grave.

Christmas then is not just for happy times but also for unhappy times. Christmas need not be a joyful occasion to be a gratifying one. In fact, Christmas finds its greatest significance and value when it comes during times of distress.

Margaret Houk lives in Appleton, Wis.

Nanjing Theological Seminary

The Christ of Christmas did not come to earth because people are happy. Christ came because evil, misfortune and human hurts are a part of all our lives.

The hymns of Advent help us anticipate the coming of Christ among us.

Songs of suffering and anticipation

Larry Penner

Just before the familiar songs of Christmas in our hymnal (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*) come the songs of Advent: "Comfort Comfort O My People," "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," "Oh How Shall I Receive Thee." The songs are less familiar. Where Christmas songs are colored with sentimental and nostalgic memories, these Advent songs are apt to be more introspective, oriented to themes of suffering and justice, brokenness and anticipation.

In *Hymnal Companion*, Joan A. Fyock writes of Advent:

"The themes for each Sunday elicit reflection on our readiness to receive God's gift in Jesus. This reflective or penitential mood clearly distinguishes the observance of Advent from the celebration of Christmas. Observing Advent keeps the church from focusing solely on the sweetness of the baby and from blurring the fact that, beyond the manger, Jesus' birth inaugurated a new reign of judgment, forgiveness, justice, suffering, peace and love."

The songs of Advent foster reflection and penitence in preparation for Christ's coming. Many speak of suffering. "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" is a prayer for freedom from fear and sin, for deliverance. "Comfort Comfort O My People" asks for comfort for the mourning and calls for repentance. Each verse of "O Come O Come Immanuel" announces Christ with a Hebrew name, then petitions Christ to alleviate some particular aspect of the suffering of the world.

The Advent hymns were often written by people who knew suffering. Paul Gerhardt, archdeacon at Lubben, Germany, until 1676, wrote the text of "Oh How Shall I Receive Thee." He lost his wife and four of his five children during the Thirty Years War. In the Lubben church, Fyock tells us, there is a portrait of Gerhardt with the inscription: "A theologian sifted in Satan's sieve," a reference to his many tribulations. Melchior Teschner, composer of that same hymn's music, was cantor at Zum Kripplein Christi Lutheran Church in Fraustadt, Germany. He survived the plague of 1613 that killed 2,000 in his hometown, only to die in a Cossack raid in 1635.

The Advent hymns were often written by people who knew suffering.

Bubonic plague: Philipp Nicolai, pastor of Unna, Westphalia, in 1597-1598 wrote and composed "Sleepers Awake," nicknamed "king of chorales," and reused in part by Handel in *Messiah* and by Bach in Cantata No. 140. During Nicolai's pastorate, bubonic plague took the lives of 1,300 of his parishioners. He was forced to flee an invasion of Spaniards two days after Christmas, 1598, not returning to Unna until April 1599.

Several of the Advent hymns describe other moments of Christ's ministry. "Oh How Shall I Receive Thee" is based on Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, just before his crucifixion. "On Jordan's Stormy Banks the Baptist's Cry" describes John's baptism of Jesus. "Hark the Glad Sound" was inspired by Jesus' reading of Scripture in the Nazareth synagogue. These hymns are included in Advent because they announce Advent themes: anticipation, solicitation and recognition of the Savior; repentance and thirst for justice, reconciliation and peace.

This Advent season, as you meditate on the Scriptures of Advent, take a moment to leaf through the hymnal's Advent section, numbers 172-188. Read the texts and reflect on what it means to prepare for the coming of Jesus. These hymns provide a context for Christ's coming. They makes sense of the Christmas message for the rest of the year.

Larry Penner, former assistant editor of The Mennonite, *lives in Lancaster, Pa.*

Letters

THE REAL STORY IN MIDDLE EAST

I want to commend you for publishing the articles on Palestinians by Melanie Zuercher and Wendy Lehman, and the editorial by J. Daryl Byler, in the Nov. 12 issue. Given the great political and economic support that Israel receives from the U.S. government and the favorable treatment Israel receives from the U.S. news media, as well as the support given to Israel by the Christian Right, we need as many articles as possible like those of Zuercher, Lehman and Byler, which tell us the real story of the injustice being perpetrated in the Middle East. I trust that there will be more. *J. Denny Weaver, Bluffton, Ohio*

REJECT MILITARY VIOLENCE

Regarding Debra McMahan's letter, "Rejected by the Church" (Nov. 12 issue, page 10), about military people being rejected by the Mennonite church, my position would be that those who advocate military violence should feel free to attend Mennonite church services, but they should be excluded from membership. I joined the Mennonite church precisely because I believe the Mennonite position on war is correct.

It's unfortunate that excluding military people from church membership will hurt their feelings, but there are so many denominations that support military violence that such people shouldn't have too much trouble finding churches outside the historic peace churches that will be more to their liking.

It certainly was inconsistent for Debra McMahan's pastor to advocate disciplining Debra's 2-year-old daughter with a "rod," but that illustrates the need for Mennonites to be more consistently nonviolent; it provides no justification for some Mennonites to be involved with the military.

Asking the Mennonite church to, in effect, water down its commitment to peace and nonviolence just to accommodate people who condone military violence is asking too much. If you don't want to support the Mennonite church's commitment to pacifism you should join a different denomination. *Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

CORRECTION ON 'DEPLOYMENT'

In the Nov. 12 issue you ran an article I wrote entitled "Deceptive Signs of Peace" (page 8). I thank you for your coverage of Israel/Palestine.

I do want to point out, though, that in the first paragraph, after "redeployment" you include in parentheses "removal." Unfortunately, nothing of the kind will occur in Hebron even under the Peres-Arafat agreement signed more than a year ago.

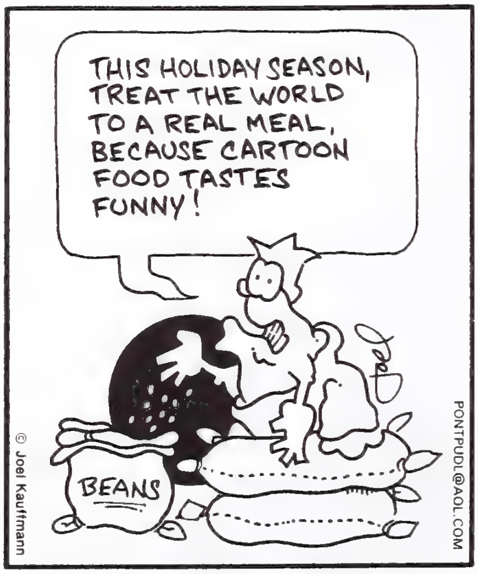
What redeployment more accurately means is "rearrangement." In the past six months or so, even more Israeli troops have moved in. The number of Israeli soldiers here has gone from approximately 1,200 to at least 1,500. I've also heard estimates nearing 2,000 soldiers. They have begun to move to the 20 percent of the city that will remain under direct Israeli control under the Peres-Arafat agreement. This is also where our apartment is located. *Wendy Lehman, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Hebron, West Bank*

Inside

Mennonite

PEACE

Pontius' Puddle


THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, TREAT THE WORLD TO A REAL MEAL, BECAUSE CARTOON FOOD TASTES FUNNY!
BEANS
© Joel Kauffmann
PONTPUDL@AOL.COM

Bible

The Christ of faith in the Jesus of history

The quest for the historical Jesus is important.

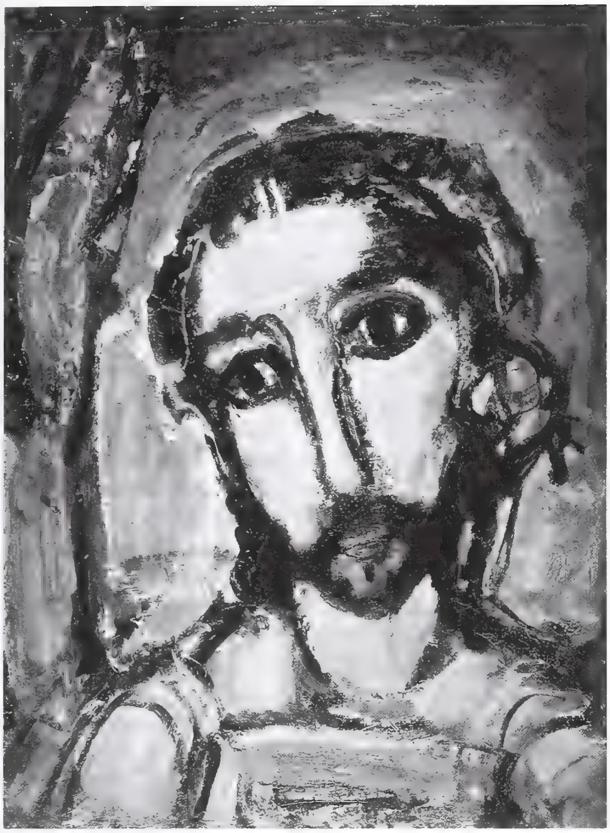
Darrell Fast

Last spring, in the year of our Lord 1996, Jesus showed up on the cover of *Time* magazine, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News*. Jesus Christ, making headlines today. What was going on? Was there a revival of Christian faith? Some new evidence for the resurrection? Were Christians taking risks for justice or peace? No, it wasn't anything like that. What was considered newsworthy in all three magazines was the Jesus Seminar.

The Jesus Seminar is a group of Bible scholars on a present-day quest to find the historical Jesus. Most of us know that modern critical scholarship has called into question many of our beliefs about Jesus: his birth in Bethlehem to the Virgin Mary, the miracles he performed, many of his sayings and his resurrection. The Jesus Seminar has not been afraid to debate these questions in public and give sensational, conflicting answers.

When you have serious students of the Bible coming to the conclusion that 82 percent of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were not uttered by him, you get headlines. This debate should concern us because we take Jesus seriously. We call it discipleship. What if we don't have to pay attention to 82 percent of what Jesus said after all?

Now this is not the time or place to critique this current, serious quest for the Jesus of history. According to the editors of *Bible Review*, all three cover stories really failed to get past the sensational conclusions to the under-


The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Hanna Fund

"Head of Christ" by Georges Rouault

lying issues about history and faith.

Here we are focusing on Jesus Christ—the second person of the Trinity—who actually was a historical person who lived on this earth. We know the first person of the Trinity as God the Father, or the Creator, the Almighty One, suggesting God's mysterious otherness, God's transcendence. The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, points to God's invisible presence everywhere, God's immanence. In between these two persons of the Trinity is Jesus, who makes this transcendent immanence specific. Jesus reveals God's essential being for our world.

There is so much that we can say about Jesus Christ, because in him all things come together. The Jesus of history is the mediator between God and humanity. Jesus is both human and divine. Jesus Christ is the revelation of God and our salvation. In Jesus Christ we have the most complete picture of who God is and what God expects of humankind. Jesus is our Savior and Lord, our teacher, our leader and our friend. To follow Jesus is our salvation. The Jesus of history is the Christ of faith. The Gospels give us the record of who this Jesus was, what he did and what it meant to those who encountered him. "The Word of God became a human being" (John 1:14). "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

But it would be a mistake to assume that the Gospels are simply a record of "just the facts" about the Jesus of history. Remember, there are four Gospels, not just one. This should already give us a clue that the Gospels include beliefs about the Jesus of history that fall into the category of the Christ of faith. This is where sincere Christians may begin to disagree with each other. And this is also where the Jesus Seminar is making headlines.

Let me illustrate this truth with a fish story found in both Luke 5 and John 21. In each account Simon Peter is a total failure as a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee. He has fished all night but caught nothing. Then Jesus tells Peter where to cast the net. What a catch! Peter is overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness. Jesus, however, invites Peter to catch and care for people. Luke places this story at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. John, however, places the story chronologically much later, as a post-resurrection event.

Jesus reveals God's essential being for our world.

Now comes the critical question, the Jesus Seminar kind of question. When did this event take place? Could it be that these are two different events? Maybe Peter just didn't get it the first time—he had to overwhelmed with all those fish, twice. (Right away, don't you smell the fatal flaw in such a conclusion? How could any fisherman worth his salt forget a catch like that?)

Eye of faith: We will never know exactly when this event took place, but it would be sheer folly to conclude that it happened twice or that it didn't happen at all. That a miracle took place is certain to the eye of faith. The evidence: the record of a changed life. Simon the fisherman became Peter the Rock, first among the disciples and an apostle of Jesus Christ. That is a matter of faith and history. The story of the miraculous catch of fish illustrates how the Christ of faith is based on the Jesus of history.

That is why the historical quest will always be important. John Dominic Crossan, one of the participants in the Jesus Seminar, makes the point well. Because we believe that Jesus was a historical person, each generation of Christians must confront this historical Jesus and reinterpret him for our time and place as the Christ of faith. We are called to reconstruct our faith in Christ, using the Jesus of history as our guide. This reconstruction was already going on in the earliest Christian communities. They were applying the Jesus of history to their lives. Their Christian faith was being shaped by what they heard and remembered of the historical Jesus.

The quest for the historical Jesus who reveals the Christ of faith is an ongoing one. It needs retelling in hymn and creed, based in Scripture and the community of faith. No one story or statement can tell it all. For example, in the Apostles' Creed we affirm that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate." That makes the life and death of Jesus specific; it locates him within historical time and place. But it is also interesting to note what the Apostles' Creed does not say. It leaves out any reference to the public ministry of Jesus—his parables, his miracles, his teachings, his encounters with the scribes and Pharisees. This is important, too, as important as being "born of the Virgin Mary (and) suffer[ing] under Pontius Pilate."

About a century ago, Albert Schweitzer put it like this: "He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to [those] who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is."

Darrell Fast is pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., and moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Fiscal health

● ● ● ● ▼

Christian shareholders have a voice

Change can happen when shareholders raise issues.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Every once in a while someone asks me about socially responsible investing, since that is what we do at Mennonite Mutual Aid. The question often focuses on whether or not shareholders of major multinational corporations can make a difference, and become agents of change within these corporations, change that will benefit not only society at large but communities and individuals who live and work within their corporate shadows.

Helping corporations modify their behavior through letter-writing campaigns, shareholder resolutions, product boycotts and, in extreme cases, the sale of the company's stock is known as shareholder activism. What shareholders are concerned about covers a wide range of issues: executive compensation, hiring and promotion practices, board diversity, environmental concerns, hiring child labor by multinational corporations and doing business in countries where repressive governments are in control. Shareholders across the country have forced numerous companies to address how they handle these issues.

Holding companies accountable for how they conduct business is a right every shareholder enjoys. It is important to remember that a shareholder is a partial owner of the company. When you own shares of a stock mutual fund, you own portions of many companies. Depending on the mutual fund you own, you may own shares of Phillip Morris, Anheuser Busch and many other companies that produce goods or services you find offensive. As a shareholder, you have a right to voice your concerns; as a Christian, that may be an obligation .

Does faith-based shareholder activism make a difference? Sometimes those of us who work every day with socially responsible issues begin to wonder. Yet when we stand back and look at changes over the past number of years, we know that people of faith have made significant contributions in bringing about corporate change and, in some cases, systemic political change.

Shareholder activism: At the center of faith-based shareholder activism is the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. Based in New York, the ICCR is a group made up of 68 religious organizations representing Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths. Mennonite Mutual Aid is a member of the organization, originally with associate status and more recently as a full member. The organization just completed its 25th year of services, which provided an opportunity to look back on what has been accomplished through shareholder activism within the Judeo-Christian community.

> ***People of faith have made significant contributions in bringing about corporate change and, in some cases, systemic political change.***

Here are some examples:

1971—The Episcopal Church files a shareholder resolution calling on General Motors to withdraw from South Africa. This action is often cited as the beginning of focused leadership from the Christian community in the corporate responsibility movement.

1976—Religious institutions begin divesting portfolios of stock in companies that do business in South Africa and terminating banking relationships with multinational banks that provide credit in South Africa.

1977—Religious investors sponsor resolutions encouraging two Chicago banks to deal with mortgage redlining —not making loans available in older or low-income neighborhoods.

1986—Winn Dixie Stores announce they will remove all South Africa products from store shelves, settling a 15-week boycott led by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

1986—General Motors and IBM announce they are pulling out of South Africa.

1988—Mennonite Mutual Aid divests all stock in companies doing business in South Africa, with the exception of companies engaged in the health-care and educational products areas.

1990—Religious investors pressure Chevron and DuPont to clean up environmental hazards in Texas after residents in the area experience an increase in cancer and birth defects. Not until religious investors raise their voices are the concerns taken seriously.

1993—MMA adopts a code of conduct for businesses operating in South Africa as set forth by the South African Council of Churches, thus lifting restrictions on investing in South Africa.

1994—South Africa holds free elections for the first time in which all South Africans are allowed to vote.

These are only highlights of hundreds of shareholder resolutions that have been advanced by the religious community. With these have been many meetings with corporate executives to help bring change without expensive and protracted shareholder resolutions. Shareholder resolutions generally follow discussions with the company, and are initiated only when it becomes obvious that change will not occur without a shareholder resolution.

The religious community continues to speak out today. On Nov. 15, I was part of a delegation with other religious investors who met with Peter Bijur, the CEO of Texaco Inc., a company under siege for racist words and actions of corporate executives. While the meeting was not open to the press at Texaco's request, it is fair to say that Texaco recognized the religious community's rights and responsibilities to address these issues.

Shareholders of faith do have a voice. It needs to be heard.

News

Churches face dilemma of members in military

Schiller Park, Ill.—Jim Stutzman Amstutz, pastor at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., calls it a creative tension "which makes me get up in the morning."

His congregation includes a member who started school this fall at the U.S. Air Force Academy. Amstutz struggles with whether there is a place in a historic peace church for someone in the military. It is a challenge of balancing compassion with belief.

"I need to live with gray reality and yet pull us to greater faithfulness," Amstutz said. He and about 120 other Mennonites attended a consultation on church members in the military Nov. 14-15. Called by the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) General Boards, it was not a decision-making meeting but an opportunity for church members to deal with the complexities of peace and compassion.

> *"They are [in the military] because of education factors, economic factors which undergird this."*
> **Leslie Francisco III**

The issue has become more visible recently, particularly in Virginia, where some Mennonite congregations located amid military bases and industries have soldiers who are members.

One of those congregations is Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Va. "The challenge before us is not so much to challenge the loyalty of the congregations that accept members in the military," said Calvary pastor Leslie Francisco III. "I think the larger issue is how we can partner in ministries ... in settings we may know nothing about."

For many, welcoming military members is an opportunity to offer a pacifist witness. Bob Hartzler, conference minister for the Northern District (GC), said, "I hope we can keep the doors open to others, because if we don't, we deny the person of Christ, the nature of the body."

Brent Foster, pastor at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., and a Vietnam War veteran, said, "If they are in such settings, I think most people will come to the way of peace and the way of Christ."

Francisco added, "I believe in the gospel of shalom. Shalom is more than peace. I believe shalom is a transformation process."

Walter Epp attested to that transformation. He grew up in a rural South Dakota Mennonite congregation which, he said, did not emphasize peace. Epp joined the Air Force in World War II, then returned home to farm and became active in his congregation. "This is when I had to face what I believed," he said.

"I'm so grateful I did not have to struggle with rejection when I came back," said Epp, a member of the Northern District peace and social concerns committee. "I took a while. I'm still on the way."

While no one opposed the idea of the church as a welcoming place, some urged that the church be clear in what it teaches about peace. Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, who pastors Peace Community Church-Mennonite in Clovis, Calif., with her husband, Duane, a veteran, said her congregation's position is, "You are welcome to join us; you are welcome to be part of us. But this is where the Mennonite church is at, this is where the congregation is at, this is where the leadership is at."

Race relations: The consultation turned into a discussion of race relations as well. Ethnic minorities, often restricted by lack of education and poor economic conditions, turn to the military for its opportunities to make better lives for themselves.

"I never joined the military for patriotic reasons or to kill," said Glen Guyton, an African-American Air Force officer and Calvary Community Church member. "Just because I've got a green suit doesn't mean I'm a violent person. I don't own weapons at home because I put my faith in the Lord. I

Inside the news

Boards discuss unity, new name, conventions / p. 15

Ministerial leadership merger proposal slowed / p. 16

New Hispanic director has heart for mission / p. 17

West Abbotsford (B.C.) Mennonite Church celebrated its 60th anniversary Nov. 17 with a special worship service, faspa and program.

• • •

A Pennsylvania historical marker recognizes the conscientious objectors who served in Civilian Public Service during World War II. About 15 percent of those serving in nonmilitary occupations throughout the United States during the war were from Pennsylvania. The marker was unveiled Oct. 16 at Friends Center at 1501 Cherry St. in Philadelphia.

• • •

Bourbon (Ind.) Chapel has left the Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church. Some church observers say a decision by the conference not to censure Southside Fellowship of Elkhart, Ind., for its acceptance of an openly gay man into membership may have led to Bourbon Chapel's decision. In the Mennonite Church's Southeast Conference, delegates approved a motion allowing conference leaders to "seek mutual agreement" with Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship for its "separation from the conference" through accepting as members a gay couple living in a covenanted, monogamous relationship. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

know that's strange coming from a military person."

Francisco said, "They're not warmongers. They don't love to fight. [They aren't] fond of killing. They are [in the military] because of education factors, economic factors which undergird this."

In fact, the military is more structured and less violent than the society many people come from. Foster, an African-American, told of his son, who is struggling in his first year of college and probably will drop out. He is not interested in church service programs.

"Either he has to go into the military or on the streets," Foster said. "On the streets he could get killed. I want my son to survive and not be a statistic."

There were many calls for the church to provide alternatives to military service for people from poorer backgrounds, such as financial support of congregational economic programs and advocacy.

But Lindsey Robinson, pastor at Locust Lane Mennonite Chapel in Harrisburg, Pa., lamented that the military is now viewed as a career choice.

"Those of us who came out of the '60s Vietnam era have a different view of the military altogether," he said.

Nate Yoder, pastor at Dayton (Va.) Mennonite Church, said the church should not allow economics to shape its peace stance. "We define who we are, and people decide to join us."

While no actions were taken at the consultation, possible next steps were discussed, including more consultations on the area conference level, sharing what congregations are doing in regard to this issue and organizing a gathering of Mennonite veterans. *Rich Preheim, associate editor of* Mennonite Weekly Review

The Rocky Mountain Mennonite Relief Sale, held Oct. 18-19 in Rocky Ford, Colo., netted $108,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. The top-selling quilt, quilted by members of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, LaJunta, Colo., went for $3,400. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

"Pursuing Peace in the Congregation" is the theme for the 1997 School for Leadership Training Jan. 20-23 at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. A special seminar to be offered Jan. 20 before the actual start of the leadership school will be led by John Howard Yoder on "Peace Theology at the End of a Century: Retrospect and Prospect." For information, contact EMS at (540) 432-4260, e-mail kounss@emu.edu.

• • •

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board, meeting Oct. 24-26 at Elkhart, Ind., accepted the resignation of Ralph Lebold, director of external programs, due to health reasons, effective in August. They approved creation of a half-time faculty position in spiritual formation and worship and discussed progress in filling the position of vice president for administration and advancement. AMBS enrollment this fall showed an increase of 25 students over last fall. In the Partners for Ministry campaign, the board recognized reaching the $9 million milestone in pledges and contributions. They welcomed Teresa Moser McDermid from Clackamas, Ore., to the board following the resignation for health reasons of Paul Musselman, Telford, Pa., who died Oct. 31. (*Mary E. Klassen*)

Time to let out the seams

Susan Miller Balzer

Greta Kreider Carlson of Minneapolis knots a comforter with her grandmother, Lois Kreider of North Newton, Kan. Last summer the Mennonite Central Committee Central States material resource center, located in North Newton, hosted "Work on Wednesday" events to help youth get started in the tradition of "service in the name of Christ."

MCC Central States has launched "Building to Share," a campaign to raise $750,000 for a new building to be erected near the current site. Says resource center workroom supervisor Lorene Kaufman, "We're spilling out at the seams."

The new facility will have a 4,200-square-foot workroom, 6,000 square feet of warehouse space and 3,000 square feet of office space that will expand the processing area for relief supplies, improve meat-canning facilities and provide space for public meetings and educational events. The building will also have more parking space for volunteers and be handicapped accessible.

Construction will begin as soon as MCC receives $400,000 designated for the project. Over the next months, MCC Central States staff will visit churches to tell of the need and solicit funds. Staff received word in early November that a foundation plans to donate $20,000 to the building project.

Boards discuss unity, new name, conventions

Schiller Park, Ill.—Expressing concerns for identity and a slow-developing merger process, the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) General Boards took steps Nov. 13-15 toward uniting into one board.

The MC General Board told the Integration Committee (IC) that the top priority was joining the MC and GC boards in consultation with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

The MC board's Church Relations Committee, which brought the recommendation, suggested merging the boards by 1999 and no later than 2001, though this was not part of the official action. It was also suggested that the board be half MC and half GC for the first 10 years.

After much discussion urging integration with its MC counterpart, the GC General Board settled on issuing an invitation to the MC executive committee to the next GC General Board meeting in March.

The boards took the actions at conjoint meetings. Any proposal to merge the two boards would need to be approved by both delegate bodies.

The measures came on the heels of a proposal from the IC to structure the merged MC/GC church into at least four regional denominational centers covering the United States and Canada, as an alternative to parallel U.S. and Canadian national conferences.

IC co-chair John C. Murray told the boards that the plan was a rough one and that it was intended to emphasize the whole rather than the parts. While no one expressed opposition to the plan, MC and GC General Board members noted the possibility of a breakdown of unity into regional entities. "There's a sense of [being] scattered and fractured," said Florence Duley, Northwest Conference representative to the MC board.

A united MC and GC board would help give cohesion. "My guess is that in a decentralized geographical structure, you will need a strong philosophical center," said Jim Harder, Division of General Services representative on the GC board.

Also fueling the General Boards' actions was the pace and complexity of the merger process since the July 1995 integration decision. Transitions of IC members and new MC and GC general secretaries have delayed progress. At the same time, sticky issues such as polity, program boards and the place of Canada in an integrated church have arisen.

Dave Linscheid

A strong center: *Dorothy Nickel Friesen and John C. Murray, center, co-chairs of the Integration Committee, listen to the concerns of Jim Harder, a General Conference General Board representative.*

"There has to be one integrated General Board speaking to these questions before we will be able to move ahead very well," said Everett Thomas, executive secretary of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM).

Lee Delp, GC board member-at-large, said, "We really are the ones who are responsible for integration."

The IC is responsible to both General Boards. In other integration-related business, the boards sent messages to the committee on the name for the new church. The GC board took action stating its preference for Mennonite Church General Conference. The MC board took a straw vote with 14 members favoring Mennonite Church and eight choosing Mennonite Church General Conference.

Both boards also stated to the IC their preference for General Board oversight of conventions in an integrated church, although the issue was marked by disagreement in MC discussions.

GC conventions are under the General Board. On the MC side, the adult convention is the responsibility of the General Board, while the highly successful youth convention is under MBCM, which wants to keep overseeing the convention.

"What we are saying is not who plans the youth convention but who is ultimately accountable for it," said Lancaster Conference representative Ervin Stutzman, a member of an ad

Faith Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alta., closed its doors Aug. 31. The church was started in 1970 as a daughter congregation of First Mennonite of Edmonton. Byron Rempel-Burkholder had been the pastor since 1993.

* * *

The St. Thomas community in New Orleans has received a $25 million Housing and Urban Development grant to revitalize the public housing development there. Mennonite Central Committee volunteers have worked in education, social services, health care and mediation in St. Thomas since 1985.

* * *

Michael Broccolo, a 37-year-old golf fanatic from Ontario, has designed part of a cemetery for people like himself. The "Fairway to Heaven" is a par three complete with tee-off area and ball washer. The tree-lined fairway has 288 plots and sandtraps filled with flowers in front of greens reserved for cremation urns. No golf balls will actually be hit on the Fairway to Heaven. (*United Church Observer*)

* * *

When Seattle Mennonite Church received a block of Freeport-McMoRan stock as a donation and subsequently took a look at the company's annual report, they were disturbed by the controversial nature of Freeport's mining activities in Irian Jaya in Indonesia. Tribal people living in and around the area where Freeport discovered a huge copper and gold deposit in 1988 have been alienated from their ancestral land. The church sent a letter to the chair of the Freeport-McMoRan board expressing its concerns as a stockholder. The church is collecting information on corporations and corporate behavior and invites other congregations interested in issues of corporate witnessing to contact Seattle Mennonite Church, 3120 N.E. 125th St., Seattle, WA 98125, (206) 361-4630. (See J.B. Miller's column on page 12.)

hoc conventions committee. "I see a difference between who plans it and to whom the planners are accountable."

But MBCM's Thomas said, "Many of the youth ministers and the youth sponsors think the reason this [convention] meets their needs is it has a different accountability structure than the adults."

Under the suggested plan, adult conventions would meet at least every four years and youth every two years. Adults and youth would meet together quadrennially. *Rich Preheim with Dave Linscheid*

Dave Linscheid

In search of unity: *Robert Zehr, left, Ron Sawatsky and Ann Weber Becker talk during General Board meetings. Zehr and Weber Becker serve on the Mennonite Church General Board and Sawatsky is moderator of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.*

Ministerial leadership merger proposal slowed

Schiller Park, Ill.—It was supposed to be the first integrated program. But at the urging of John Esau, director of ministerial leadership, and others, the General Conference General Board during Nov. 14-15 meetings put the brakes on a proposal to merge the ministerial leadership programs of the Mennonite Church (MC), General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Esau told the board the proposal was premature. It was based on the idea of a U.S. national body in the integrated church, an assumption now being reconsidered. He said the proposal also needed work on accountability structures and personnel policies. Meanwhile, some cooperative measures have already been implemented.

"Given the proposal and what it was calling for, we are all doing that now," Esau said.

The General Board thanked the planning committee that brought the proposal but took no other action on it. The MC Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries tabled the proposal at an Oct. 18 meeting. Former GC general secretary Vern Preheim had suggested last year that the ministerial leadership programs could be merged by the end of 1996.

"I would see this coming together fairly soon after some direction [from the Integration Committee]," said Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, General Board member-at-large and a member of the committee that brought the proposal.

The impending MC/GC merger affected 1997 General Board budget discussions. As restricted funds, which have been used to balance the budget in past years, have dried up, the board is looking at a $23,000 shortfall in its own $210,790 budget.

One idea to make up the difference is for two-thirds of it to come from the commissions and one-third from "creative ways" of generating more income. That would mean new, ad hoc methods of fundraising, an idea that did not sit well with one board member.

"Somehow that doesn't fit into the total picture of how I view things," said Wes Sawatsky, Commission on Education representative. "I'm just uncomfortable with that."

But the alternative is cutting program, something general secretary James Schrag argued against in the face of MC/GC merger.

"We can't carry a shambles of a program and expect it to have any respect [in integration]," he said. "We don't do this for our own sakes. We do this for the sake of the new organization, to which we want to bring a strong partnership."

A final budget will be approved at the board's March meeting. *Rich Preheim*

The Alban Institute will sponsor a conference on "The Pastor as Spiritual Leader" Jan. 20-23 in Fort Worth, Texas. For more information and a complete listing of spring continuing education offerings, call the Alban Institute at 1-800-486-1318, Ext. 230.

• • •

Lion Publishing has released *The Children's Bible in 365 Stories* with all anti-Jewish references modified. For more information, contact American Interfaith Institute, The Liberty Museum, 32 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-2779; (215) 925-2800; fax (215) 925-3800.

• • •

Japanese infatuation with "Anne of Green Gables," L.M. Montgomery's heroine from the story series set in Prince Edward Island, Canada, is fueling the already lucrative Green Gables industry there. One of Montgomery's descendants stages wedding ceremonies for Japanese couples (most already legally united in Japan) in the house where Montgomery herself was married, now called the Anne of Green Gables Museum. The ceremony replicates Montgomery's, including a bridal descent down the same staircase and the same organ playing the same hymn, "The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden." (*United Church Observer*)

• • •

Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole stopped at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College for an early afternoon rally Oct. 26. Some students wondered aloud why the college allowed the rally to be held on a campus associated with a peace church and questioned whether the rally violated separation between church and state. FPC president Richard Kriegbaum responded by saying that the Dole campaign had rented the site, so it did not constitute endorsement of a candidate, and that college officials were "excited about the opportunity for our students to be able to observe part of the American political process close up." (*Joy Hofer*)

Looking for peace in Zaire

Dave Klassen

This 1994 photo shows a mother and child at one of four refugee camps near Bukavu, Zaire, that Mennonite Central Committee helped support. The number of displaced people in eastern Zaire in recent months surpassed 1994 totals.

MCC is appealing for 50,000 good-quality, full-sized blankets by Christmas. The blankets will go to eastern Zaire, where more than 1 million people—Rwandan and Burundian refugees as well as Zairian villagers—have fled camps and homes due to fighting between various Zairian, Rwandan and Burundian groups.

People wishing to contribute blankets may deliver them to any MCC office by Dec. 25, along with $3 U.S./$4 Cdn. per blanket to pay for shipping costs. MCC also asks Mennonites to pray that the fighting not spread. Zaire is home to some 170,000 Mennonites.

New Hispanic director has heart for mission

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Gilberto Flores is a man who has reserved a big space in his heart for mission.

The Hispanic Resources Ministries director for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) since July, Flores passionately believes that Christians are called "to walk with people in the world."

Dave Linscheid

Gilberto Flores

Drawing on the example of Jesus, Flores shared his vision for reaching out to those from different backgrounds with three Hispanic Mennonite congregations in the Chicago area Oct. 25-27.

"Jesus never talked with a dominant attitude to people. Jesus looked at everyone as being on the same level," said Flores in an interview after the meeting.

As a result, he said, Jesus "was controversial because he opened the door to people who were labeled 'bad.'"

Not only did Jesus treat people with respect, he also reached out to them in a holistic way, said Flores.

"Mission is not proselytizing. Mission is about service. It is more about our hearts than our minds," he said.

While the three congregations—Comunidad de Fe, Lawndale Hispanic Mennonite Church and Sonido de Albanza—agreed with his presentation, they also related some of the struggles they face in moving beyond their own community.

It is difficult, at times, to have a larger vision of the church when many members have recently immigrated to North America and are immersed in trying to understand a new culture.

Flores thinks the church should understand and empathize with this reality. He also expressed concern that a person's ethnic identity can create barriers for outreach into a community.

"I never told my parents that I want to be Hispanic," said Flores. A decision to follow Christ, on the other hand, he said, is a conscious choice. "First of all, we are Christians. We are called to witness for Jesus, for the kingdom of God." *Carla Reimer*

Good Books of Intercourse, Pa., will cut the number of titles it publishes from 20 to 30 per year to two to six and may be sold. Publication of *Festival Quarterly* magazine has been temporarily suspended, according to publisher Merle Good. These moves follow the bankruptcy filing and Chapter 11 reorganization of the parent company, Good Enterprises Ltd., on July 1. GEL plans to reduce its six buildings to three, hoping to cut rent by 43 percent. Payroll has already been decreased by 44 percent and advertising by 66 percent. (*Mennonite Weekly Review* and *The Lancaster Intelligencer-Journal*)

• • •

Descendants of Jews who lived in Hebron before 1929 met Nov. 10 with Palestinian legislators in Hebron to say that the Jewish settlers there now in no way represent them. The settlers claim they are in Hebron to reestablish the Jewish presence and have used as an excuse to take over buildings the fact that Jews used to live in some of them. Most Jews left Hebron in 1929 or soon after following a massacre in which 67 Jews were killed. The descendants say neither the settlers nor the Israeli government has a right to the property. (*Christian Peacemaker Teams*)

• • •

Patients from the surgery, medical and pediatric wards at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan, were moved into a new facility Sept. 30. The hospital began construction on the $22 million (U.S.) building in November 1993. The new addition will increase the number of beds from 200 to 500. The old hospital building, which was built in 1981, is also being remodeled. Mennonite Christian Hospital decided to update its medical facilities due to an increased need for long-term and chronic-care programs, says Harold Lue, administrative vice superintendent. Hualien county, he adds, has a large population of elderly as well as a high mortality rate due to traffic accidents. The hospital was started by Mennonite missionaries in 1954.

Record

For the first time since before World War II, a Mennonite is headed for Capitol Hill. Jerry Moran, a Republican from Hays, Kan., won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in the Nov. 5 election. He is a member of North Oak Community Church (Mennonite Brethren) in Hays. The last Mennonite to serve in Congress was Edward Clayton Eicher, a Democrat from Iowa, from 1932-38. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

* * *

The Christian Peacemaker Teams steering committee, at its October meeting in Chicago, agreed to make recruitment of a 12-person full-time Christian Peacemaker Corps its highest priority. CPCers "provide sustained vision, leadership and stability in situations of violent crisis," says CPT director Gene Stoltzfus. Currently there are seven full-time CPCers.

* * *

Two hundred people met Oct. 11-13 in Washington, the early home of the Brethren/Mennonite Council on Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC), to celebrate the organization's 20th anniversary. The sixth BMC convention theme was "Piecing New Patterns from Old Cloth"—a tie to the AIDS Memorial Quilt on display in the capital that same weekend. On Oct. 12, conventiongoers joined 150,000 other people in the AIDS candlelight vigil. One workshop led to formation of a new group. Organizers of The College Network (TCN) hope to give gay, lesbian and bisexual young people a forum in which to share stories and find support as they come out to family, friends and communities, and give alumni of Brethren and Mennonite colleges, parents and friends opportunities to support these young people. An e-mail network is now being formed. Contact Monica Haines at mooream@mail.auburn.edu or Monica Kaufman at monicajk@goshen.edu. More information on BMC is available at (612) 305-0315, e-mail BMCouncil@aol.com.

DEATHS

Margaret Thiessen Block, Three Hills, Alta., died Nov. 4. She served for approximately 20 years at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., beginning in 1961.

MINISTERS

Jorge Argueta was licensed for ministry Aug. 3 as church planter at Iglesia Fuente de Vida, Upland, Calif.

Ken Ashman was ordained Aug. 18 as pastor at Servant Community Church, Arroyo Grande, Calif.

Delmer and **Elsie Epp** were installed as co-pastors at East Zorra Church, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 22.

Daniel Epp-Tiessen was licensed for ministry at First Church, Kitchener, Ont., Sept. 15.

Stanley Gingerich was licensed as lay pastor at Westhills Mennonite Fellowship, Baden, Ont., Nov. 3.

Carrie Harder was licensed as a pastoral care worker at Stirling Avenue Church, Kitchener, Ont., in November.

Lois and **Tom Harder** were licensed Nov. 17 and installed as pastors at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan.

Catherine Hunsberger was licensed Oct. 6 as pastor at Rainham Church, Selkirk, Ont.

Doug Johnstone was licensed in November as pastor at Milverton (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Glyn Jones and **Susan Allison-Jones** were ordained Sept. 15 as pastors at Wilmot Church, Baden, Ont.

Garry and **Gloria Jost** were ordained as pastors at Pacific Covenant Church, Canby, Ore., Nov. 3.

Frederick Jan Kouttjie was ordained Aug. 17 as pastor at Jemaat Kristen Indonesia Zion, Fullerton, Calif.

Ken Peters was installed Sept. 22 as youth pastor at First Church, Burns Lake, B.C. He is also pastor at Church of the Way, Granisle, B.C.

Judy Shantz was licensed in November as pastor at Milverton (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Philip Wagler was licensed as pastor at Calvary Church, Ayr, Ont., June 23.

Steve Yoder was ordained as associate pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., Nov. 10.

Rebecca Yoder-Neufeld was licensed for ministry at First Church, Kitchener, Ont., Sept. 15.

WORKERS

Karl Koop, Vineland, Ont., has been appointed assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist-Mennonite studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind.

John Paul Lederach, Harrisonburg, Va., has been named adjunct professor in conflict transformation at AMBS, Elkhart, Ind.

Wiens

Greta Wiens, Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., returned to Japan in October for another Commission on Overseas Mission term. She will teach English with the Kobe Mennonite Church and the Young Women's Christian Association in Kobe. She served in Fukuoka, Japan 1990-93.

Art director

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking an innovative, high-level art director to work within a creative team of professionals to support a variety of corporate communications needs. This individual will work with various internal clients to define and understand project objectives. The art director will also participate in creative brainstorming, concepting, design, and print preparation. Qualified applicants will have at least three years of desktop publishing experience, be proficient with Quark, Illustrator, and PhotoShop. A bachelor or technical degree in art or graphic design, or at least six years of full-time graphic design experience is required.

MMA is a church-affiliated insurance and financial services company. We offer a competitive salary, excellent benefits, and a non-smoking work environment.

Call or send resume to:

M M A

MMA
Human Resources
Post Office Box 483
Goshen, IN 46527
(219) 533-9511

President, Fresno Pacific University

The Board of Trustees of **Fresno Pacific University** invites nominations and applications for the position of president of Fresno Pacific University.

Fresno Pacific University is an evangelical liberal arts university with 1,600 students, sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Church. All employees of the university must be able to support the theological orientation of the university and express a personal Christian commitment. Founded in 1944, the university communicates a distinctively biblical, Christ-centered vision of community and social order, through liberal-arts based undergraduate, graduate and professional higher education. The university offers the Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. The university is accredited as a senior university by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Responsibilities:
- Lead the institution to its future as a Christian university with a strong commitment to the liberal arts, providing transcendent leadership to encourage a shared vision among faculty, staff, students, alumni, Fresno community, church and board.
- Articulate the vision and needs of the university, and solicit funding in the "Pacific Leadership Campaign," a building and endowment development campaign currently in progress, and in other and future fund-raising and developing campaigns.
- Represent, guide and promote the university to and among the Mennonite Brethren churches and conferences, other churches and parachurch agencies, locally, nationally and internationally, and among the regional educational community, larger Fresno community and central California.
- Through delegation to the administration of the university, develop and execute plans and policies for effective operations, academic and student life programs, internal and external communication, careful fiscal management, and internal development of the institution in an atmosphere characterized by persuasive leadership and consensual decision making.

Qualifications:
- Significant knowledge of and commitment to excellence in Christian higher education
- Commitment to Jesus Christ and his church. Membership in a Mennonite Brethren congregation preferred
- Commitment to the ideals of the university as stated in "The Fresno Pacific University Idea," and agreement with the "Theological Orientation of the University"
- Ability to lead in articulating the shared vision and mission of the university, and to persuasively and consensually guide the shaping of the Christian character and the academic programs of the university
- Ability to work with and build a strong board of trustees through recruitment, training and guidance in policy development and donor cultivation
- Successful experience in promotion and fund-raising in the broader public
- Successful experience and ability in market analysis, planning, delegation, policy-making and administrative oversight
- Terminal degree in an academic discipline preferred

Nominations, application and inquiries should be sent to **Dr. Ted Nickel, Administrative Officer, Presidential Search Committee, 7081 N. Marks, Box 206, Fresno, CA 93711; phone or fax (209) 435-0330.** The committee will begin the selection process on Jan. 15, 1997, and will continue until a suitable applicant is found.

Interested candidates should submit a letter outlining their interest and qualifications for the position and a curriculum vitae. References will be requested at a later date.

Fresno Pacific University provides equal opportunity for employment without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap.

Academic dean, Goshen College

Goshen College, a selective Mennonite liberal arts college of approximately 1,000 students, seeks an academic leader—a person of integrity and vision—for the position of **academic dean**. We seek expressions of interest and nominations of candidates with distinguished teaching and scholarly records, appropriate administrative experience and demonstrated leadership for a community that values both spiritual and intellectual vitality. Candidates must be able to articulate their religious beliefs and practices, demonstrate understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and its values and exhibit a history of involvement in a local church congregation.

The academic dean's most important task is to set the standard of excellence for both faculty and curriculum and to help faculty achieve their goals. Duties include administering outcomes assessment and faculty development programs and guiding a review of general education. The academic dean will also recommend to the provost the appointment of all teaching faculty members and all candidates for tenure and promotion. In addition, the dean supervises the libraries, oversees department chairs, faculty evaluation and orientation and advises the provost with respect to the academic budget. Expertise in the area of technology and/or experience in international education and service learning would be considered highly desirable.

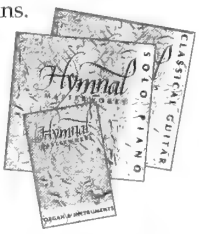
The college, which celebrated its centennial year in 1994-95, is located in northern Indiana in a town of 24,000. Its most distinctive program, the Study-Service Term, a semester of immersion and service learning in a significantly different culture, has taken 5,664 students and more than 150 faculty to 15 developing countries since 1968.

Goshen College's student body includes students from 32 states and 35 countries. Approximately 67 percent are Mennonite, and most others represent a variety of Christian groups. The college has balanced its budget for 57 consecutive years. In the last 12 years endowment has grown from $4 million to $56 million. The 135-acre main campus includes 19 buildings. In addition, the college manages a 1,150-acre nature preserve and educational center located between Goshen and Fort Wayne.

Deadlines: Applications and nominations taken until Dec. 31. Job will begin July 1, 1997.

Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send nominations, inquiries and applications to: **Shirley H. Showalter, President-elect, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **shirleyhs@goshen.edu**.



The Hymnal Masterworks Collection

This year, give the gift of music! Celebrate the artistic and spiritual power found in everyday hymns. Unique and original instrumental interpretations of hymns from around the world will both touch the heart and stir the soul. Music is selected from and inspired by *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*

Organ & Instruments (56 min.)
Classical Guitar (57 min.)
Solo Piano (56 min.)

CDs	**$15.95 U.S. / $19.95 CAN**
Cassettes	**$10.95 U.S. / $15.75 CAN**

Order toll free 1 800 743-2484

FAITH & LIFE PRESS

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor** to begin Feb. 3, 1997. Primary duties include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications for this 11-month position include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and resume, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7535; fax (219) 535-7609**; e-mail: **martyel@goshen.edu**; web site: **http://www.goshen.edu**. Application deadline: **Dec. 20**, or until the position is filled. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

PLANNED GIVING

Avoid a HEFTY tax bill

Donate your appreciated stock and real estate to Mennonite Central Committee. Avoid capital gains tax entirely, gain a tax deduction and receive annual cash payments.

You'll help hurting people and stretch your dollars.

To learn more, contact MCC or your Mennonite Foundation representative.

Mennonite Central Committee 717 859-3889
Mennonite Foundation 800 348-7468

HIGHLIGHTS OF CHINA AND HONG KONG

May 22-June 12, 1997

Includes:

- *Shanghai*
- *The Great Wall*
- *Terracotta Warriors*
- *Yangtze River Cruise*
- *Museums and Tombs*
- *Visits with persons in China and Hong Kong*
- *Beijing*
- *Xian*
- *Chongquing*
- *Hong Kong*

BOOK NOW to be ensured a seat.
Call **1-800-565-0451**.

Ask about our other tours:
Jamaica, Paraguay, Scandinavia, Europe, Alaska.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

Reg.#1567624

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

Values? Sound money management? Expect both.

M M A

If you thought investing according to socially responsible guidelines and sound money management were mutually exclusive, think again.

MMA has been investing exclusively with social screens for the last 50 years.

This combination of sound money management and investing according to socially responsible guidelines is reflected in our mutual funds, MMA Praxis Mutual Funds.

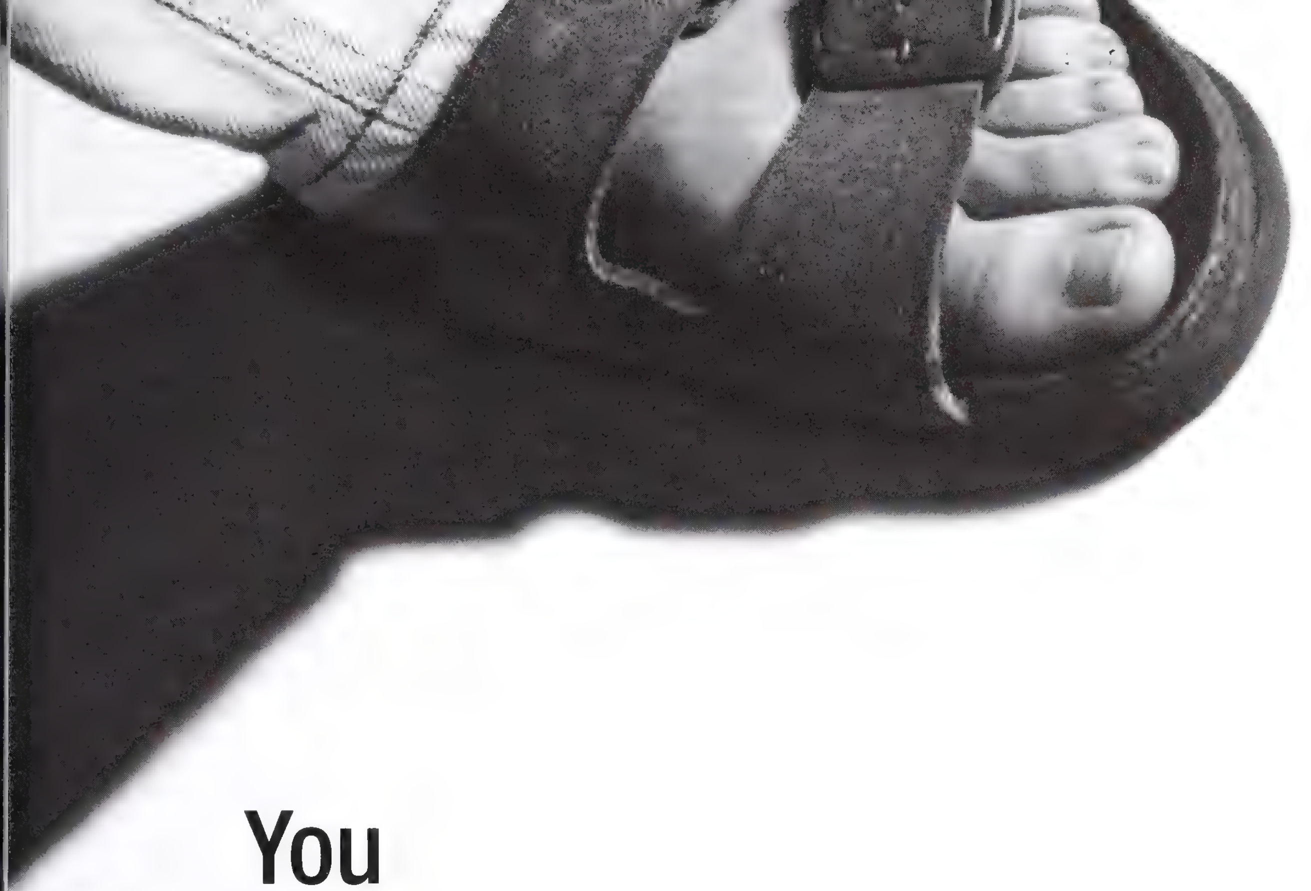
For mutual funds that combine investments according to your values with sound money management, you need to find out more about MMA Praxis.

Contact an MMA counselor or call
1-800-9-PRAXIS

Available in most states.
For more complete information including charges and expenses, see your investment representative to receive a prospectus. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest or send money. MMA Praxis Mutual Funds are distributed by BISYS Fund Services.

Calvary Mennonite Church, Aurora, Ore., invites applications for the position of **associate pastor**, a full-time position that will focus on worship and youth ministries. Starting date as soon as feasible.

Send resume and tape of ministry to **Palmer Becker, 6711 S. Lone Elder Road, Aurora, OR 97002; (503) 266-2202;** e-mail: **PalmerBeck@aol.com**.



You don't have to wear sandals

to serve with Mennonite Central Committee. MCC needs people with varied skills—nurses, teachers, child-care workers, truck drivers, receptionists, doctors, construction workers. Contact the MCC office nearest you to find a service assignment that fits your skills, your feet and your fancy.

Mennonite
Central
Committee®

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

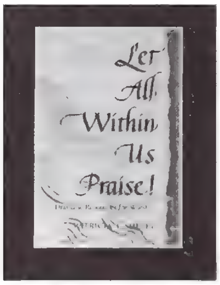
Reviews

BOOKS

VOICING GOD'S PRAISES

Let All Within Us Praise! Dramatic Resources for Worship *by Patricia J. Shelly (Faith & Life Press, 1996, 210 pages, $15.95 U.S./$22.75 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Joyce Shutt, Orrtanna, Pa.



This unique collection of 45 Scripture-based reader's theater scripts and 16 original songs is designed to enhance corporate worship. Shelly writes, "This book grew out of 10 years directing chapel for the Bethel College community and a lifetime of worshiping with the people of God in various church communities." It shows.

The readings use from one to six readers, are divided into seven different categories and draw from a wide variety of Old and New Testament passages. Readings often combine a number of related texts, giving each extra depth and breadth.

The readings are focused and dramatic, but not difficult to prepare. The reader's theater model eliminates the need for memorization and minimizes preparation time. *Let All Within Us Praise* comes in a spiral binder, making it user-friendly, as does having both readings and songs in the same volume.

Shelly's original songs are hauntingly beautiful. However, she employs an unusual rhythmic pattern and often writes in a minor key, unfortunately making it more difficult for the less than accomplished musician to learn the music. Could she be persuaded to prepare a tape to accompany this book so newcomers to her music can hear how her wonderful songs sound?

Let All Within Us Praise is an excellent resource for congregations looking for new ways to give depth to their worship and new material for drama or worship teams. I also found it an inspiration to be more creative myself.

STORIES FOR OUR SONGS

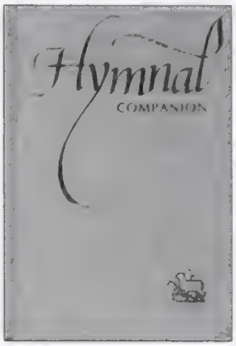
Hymnal Companion, *compiled and written by Joan A. Fyock, edited by Lani Wright (Herald Press and Faith & Life Press, 1996, 752 pages, $39.95 U.S./ $55.95 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, Lancaster, Pa.

Church musicians, pastors and Mennonites who love music will want a copy of this resource on the shelf beside their hymnal. Well researched and presented, this volume shares useful brief commentaries on all the hymns and many of the readings in *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*

The book comprises three sections: an alphabetical listing of hymns with commentary; a numerical listing of selected worship resources with commentary; an alphabetical listing of short biographies of most of the composers, writers, translators and arrangers of the hymns and resources.

At times academic, at times anecdotal, the short essays can give perspective and added meaning to hymns used in worship. For example, the story of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" could be shared in a service before the hymn is sung:



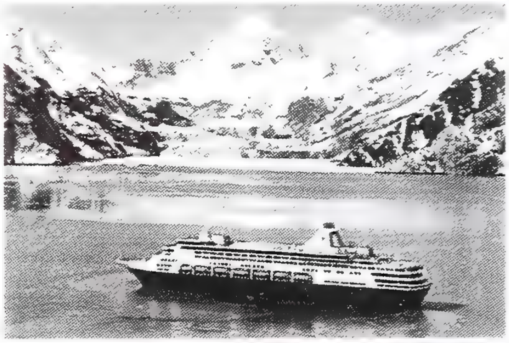
"Iowa-born Adelaide Pollard felt called [to Africa], but her plans were thwarted by poor health and insufficient funds. In her disappointment she attended a prayer meeting where she found peace of mind in submission to the will of God. Meditating on the story of the potter in Jeremiah 18: 3-4, she wrote this well-loved hymn."

The biographies section also yields wonderful stories. These could be printed in bulletins or shared by a song leader, provide illustrations for sermons or become the basis of a children's story.

The worship resource section often addresses themes applicable beyond the specific resource being discussed. Many definition-essays on topics like Lent or Pentecost may miss a broader audience because they fall under specific readings, rather than in a separate section. But a well-compiled general index will point readers looking for specific topics to these pages.

Anyone who plans music for worship will find *Hymnal Companion* a helpful tool in bringing out the nuanced meanings of our hymnody.

ALASKA, YUKON & the INSIDE PASSAGE



July 9-19, 1997

Enjoy majestic beauty, shimmering glaciers, deep fjords, soaring eagles, thundering caribou, 1,000-mile cruise and much more with Mennonite friends from all over North America.

Call **1-800-565-0451 TODAY** for a brochure.

Ask about our other tours: Jamaica, Paraguay, China, Scandinavia & Europe.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

Reg.#1567624

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

IDENTITY OUT OF DIVERSITY

In Search of Unity: The Story of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba *by Anna Ens (CMBC Publications, 1996, 290 pages, $20 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Rachel Waltner Goossen, Goshen, Ind.

This story of a provincial-level Mennonite conference highlights two related themes: migration of peoples to the Manitoba landscape and the quest for unity. Successive waves of groups from the Dutch-Prussian-Russian Mennonite tradition settled in Manitoba: the early Kanadier in the 1870s, the later Kanadier around the turn of the century and the Russlander, who arrived in the 1920s, assisted by the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization.

These German-speaking groups, alike in ethnic and religious roots but diverse in cultural practices and educational standing, constituted a significant Mennonite presence in Manitoba. Later immigrations occurred after World War II, when displaced European Mennonites arrived in Winnipeg, and after 1960, when Kanadier Mennonites who had earlier moved to Mexico began a return migration. More recently, Asian immigrants have become a part of urban congregations in Manitoba.

Anna Ens traces the roots of a cooperative Mennonite identity in the province to schools, ministers' meetings and Bible conferences. Wartime tensions—including Mennonites' differing responses to military conscription—slowed the pace of conference work.

In 1946 a group known as the Schonwieser Gemeinde withdrew from the Manitoba Conference as the result of a doctrinal dispute over biblical authority and, Ens suggests, biases of some rural Mennonites against the progressive Schonwieser leader J.H. Enns. Finally, in 1968, reconciliation occurred when the large Schonwieser congregation, First Mennonite of Winnipeg, joined the Manitoba Conference.

Today the conference includes 52 congregations with 11,000 members. The book includes sketches of each of these congregations. Photographs and maps enhance the book's usefulness as a reference tool for readers interested in Manitoba Mennonite history.

Less satisfactory is Ens' handling of broadly interpretive issues, such as Mennonites' shift away from the German language, accommodation to the state and relation to Native peoples and to the environment. Readers interested in the Manitoba story should couple this book with historian Ted Regehr's new volume, *Mennonites in Canada, 1939-1970* (see Resources).

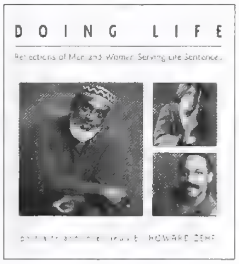
PORTRAITS AND DREAMS

Doing Life: Reflections of Men and Women Serving Life Sentences *by Howard Zehr (Good Books, 1996, 124 pages, $15.95 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Kevin Driedger, Goshen, Ind.

Life is not necessarily a word of joy, at least not for the 58 men and women featured in this book. Howard Zehr presents the reader with portraits of the inmates—without any of the mug shot "trappings"—as well as interviews with them delving into what it means to serve a life sentence.

This is a book of reflections as much as it is a book of portraits. The portraits are not simple pictures identifying someone, but a reflection of the person that causes us to stop and look beyond their surface. Zehr suggests that we take this photographic presentation "as a gift, something received from the subject[s]."



The criminal justice system works the way it does because it can lump all these people together as murderers. This book, however, enhances their humanity and individuality. As Zehr states, "At the very least, lifers deserve to be seen for who they are—individuals with fears and dreams, much like the rest of us."

Zehr admits that the inmates involved in this book are the chosen few. A challenge this book does not engage is what to do with those inmates who have not changed and do not speak the words of remorse and maturity we want to hear.

Doing Life celebrates humanity in a place where humanity is degraded. In this book we encounter the pain of our broken world and the beauty of God's still-good creation.

Resources

● ● ▼

- **Mennonites in Canada, 1939-1970: A People Transformed** by T.D. Regehr (University of Toronto Press, 1996, $29.95 Cdn.) explores the changes that took place and how they affected witness and mission.
- **No Strange Fire** by Ted Wojtasik (Herald Press, 1996, $14.95 U.S./$21.50 Cdn.) is a novel that depicts Amish life in a community beset by a number of arson fires.
- **Living Beyond Our Means: The Extravagance of Biblical Stewardship** by Carol Duerksen (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) is part of the Generation Why series for high-school youth.
- **A Speck in the Universe: The Bible on Self-Esteem and Peer Pressure** by Steve Ropp (Faith & Life Press, 1996, $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn.) is part of the Generation Why series for high-school youth.
- **The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics** by Joseph J. Kotva, Jr. (Georgetown University Press, 1996, $55 U.S.) makes the case for a virtue framework for Christian morality.
- **Living in the Way: The Pilgrimage of Jake and Trudie Unrau** by Jake Unrau with Johann D. Funk (CMBC Publications, 1996, $13 Cdn.) tells the story of the Unraus, long-time workers with Native people in Canada and the United States. Available from CMBC Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781.
- **Church World Service film and video library catalog** contains 400 titles on hunger, development, the environment, multiculturalism and other topics, all available for free loan. For a free catalog, contact CWS Film and Video Library, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; (219) 264-3102; fax (219) 262-0966; cws.film.library.parti@ecunet. org.
- **Empowering Ministry: Ways to Grow in Effectiveness** by Donald P. Smith (Westminster/John Knox, 1996, $21.99 U.S.) states that pastors who focus on empowering others are the most effective in their ministry.

************CAR-RT SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 516
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Keep awake

In the darkness of our world, God calls us to keep awake, to look for signs of God's reign breaking in. Although the times may seem bleak, eyes of faith will be alert to evidences of hope.

Advent marks the beginning of the church year. While most new year celebrations are festive and look back on the year just past, the church year begins with a somber, forward-looking tone. As Larry Penner points out (page 9), many of our songs of Advent have come out of suffering.

The Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Advent (Dec. 1) is Mark 13:24-37. Jesus speaks about a time "after that suffering" (13:24) when God's reign will break into the world in a new way. He uses symbols (sun, moon, stars) to describe the toppling of rulers and empires. He points to the fig tree as a sign of a new order coming to replace the old.

Then he warns his followers, "Beware, keep alert" (13:33) and "keep awake" (13:35, 37). Mark emphasizes "beware" and "keep awake," each of which occurs five times in that Gospel. Mark even uses a military reference to the Roman nocturnal watches (evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn) to stress the importance of being watchful. Nevertheless, when Jesus' hour arrives, and he is about to be arrested in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-42, which includes the other three uses of "keep awake"), the disciples are asleep.

> ***Living in Advent involves waiting in exile with Israel, under the rule of Babylon (as in Isaiah) or Rome (as in Mark), for God's reign to topple them.***

The readings for the Second Sunday of Advent (Dec. 8) take us in a different direction. In Isaiah 40:1-11, God calls for words of comfort (40:1) and forgiveness (40:2), which bring hope (40:9-11). Here and in Mark 1:1-8 are commands to "prepare the way of the Lord."

That way is a straight one in which "every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low" (40:4). Again, as in Mark 13, we see hints of kingdoms toppling so that God's reign may be made manifest. The "good tidings" (40:9) is that "we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home" (2 Peter 3:13, part of the epistle reading for the Second Sunday of Advent).

Living in Advent involves waiting in exile with Israel, under the rule of Babylon (as in Isaiah) or Rome (as in Mark), for God's reign to topple them. But it is an active waiting, preparing the way, making the road straight, keeping awake, watching for signs of God's inbreaking reign.

Songs of hope: These signs may come from various sources, like Muslim women showing hospitality (page 3), or getting together with other believers to worship (page 6), or delivering food to pensioners in Russia (page 7), or bringing a smile to a person who's sad during the holidays (page 8), or singing songs of hope, anticipating the coming of Christ (page 9).

Lately I have been praying the morning and evening Office, which includes prayers, a psalm and the Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79) in the morning and the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) in the evening. These two songs each speak of God's movement in history, of the coming reign of justice for God's people. Mary praises God for scattering the proud, bringing down the powerful, lifting up the lowly, filling the hungry with good things and sending the rich away empty. Zechariah blesses God for keeping the promises made to Abraham and for the dawn about to break upon the earth "to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, [and] to guide our feet into the way of peace" (1:78-79).

This regular praying, this remembering God's word to Mary and Zechariah, to Israel and to the church, helps keep me awake.

Be alert for signs of God's coming reign, which has already entered our world in Jesus. Keep awake, so that when a bright star shines over an obscure stable, we will notice and follow its light. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

$2.00

Inside

The breath of God / p. 9

Create a calendar of prayer / p. 11

Walking the bridge / p. 12

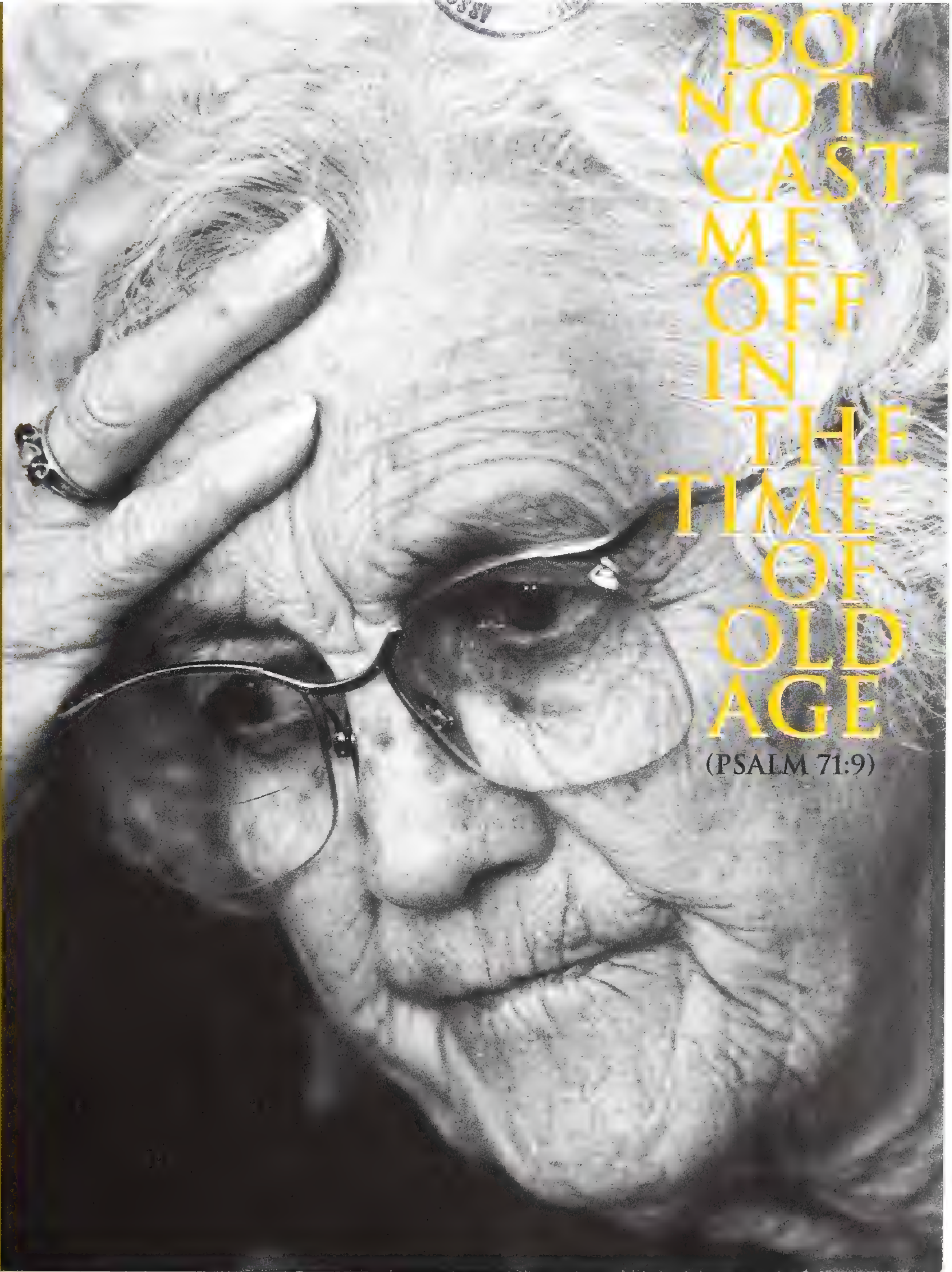
THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

111: 24
DECEMBER 24, 1996

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
ELKHART
LIBRARY
JAN 7 '97

- Granny dumping (page 3)
- What goes around comes around (page 5)
- The real meaning of love (page 6)
- Grandma takes Greek (page 8)



DO NOT CAST ME OFF IN THE TIME OF OLD AGE

(PSALM 71:9)

Prologue

While the Bible and many cultures teach that we should honor the elderly, the opposite often happens in our society. Read one doctor's account of a phenomenon called "granny dumping" (page 3).

A fairy tale (page 5) brings a lesson about how our actions may come back to haunt us.

Margaret Houk (page 6) learned how God may be revealed in what appears to be an imposition.

Grandma Elda Bachman tells of her experience of taking a course in Greek at our seminary (page 8). She is an example of one who is willing to learn new things.

Darrell Fast ends his three-part series of reflections on the Trinity (page 9).

As we begin new calendars, writes Marlene Kropf (page 11), perhaps we should think about creating a calendar of prayer.

Melinda Shirey describes what she learned in visiting the United Nations (page 12). *gh*

Our staff wishes you a joyous Christmas and new year.

From left: Melanie Mueller, Gordon Houser, Melanie Zuercher and John Hiebert

Next issue: Dismantling racism

Cover: Photo by Harry Cutting

Contents

FEATURES

3 Granny dumping

The abandonment of the elderly

5 What goes around comes around

A parable

6 The real meaning of love

A stranger who is at first an imposition becomes a friend sent by God.

7 Album

8 Grandma takes Greek

You're never too old to learn something new.

DEPARTMENTS

9 Letters

9 Bible

11 Learning to pray

12 Commentary

13 News

20 Record

22 Reviews

24 Editorial

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $28 U.S., $34 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Periodical postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1996

Editor: Gordon Houser

Assistant editor: Melanie A. Zuercher

Editorial assistant: Melanie Mueller

Art director: John Hiebert

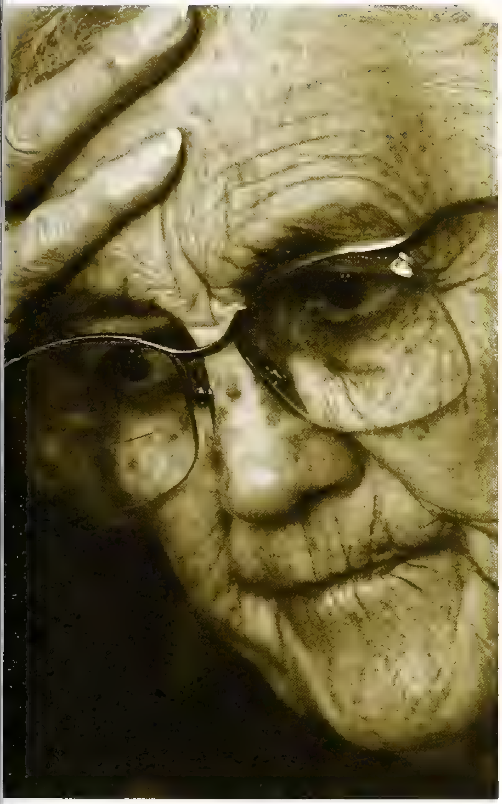
Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail: TheMennonite@gcmc.org, web site: http://www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/tm.html

General Conference Mennonite Church

GRANNY DUMPING

The abandonment of the elderly in our society

Paul C. Fox



Harry Cutting

The patient was an elderly woman, her silver hair disheveled, dressed in the usual open-backed hospital gown. She was sitting quietly on the edge of the gurney in the emergency room of a small community hospital in rural Virginia. I looked at the nurse's brief notation of the patient's complaint: "not feeling well (acc. to fam. member)." Not very helpful. "Well, Mrs. Jeter, how can I help you today?" I asked, in my best bedside manner voice (one of those things you learn in medical school).

She smiled. "Well, I don't know," she replied, gesturing vaguely. Her voice tapered off, and she did not offer further information.

"Your family says you haven't been feeling well lately," I said.

"I reckon they must be right," she said.

I began to have suspicions about her mental status. "Can you tell me where you are right now?"

She looked around the room. "Looks like some kind of hospital."

"How old are you?"

"Well, I don't rightly know, but I reckon I must be about 65." Wrong by 15 years. It became evident that this patient was not going to be able to tell me much about her condition.

Wearily (for it was 2 a.m. and I was longing for a few hours of sleep) I walked out to the night clerk's desk. "I'm going to need to talk with Mrs. Jeter's family," I told her. "The lady can't tell me anything about herself."

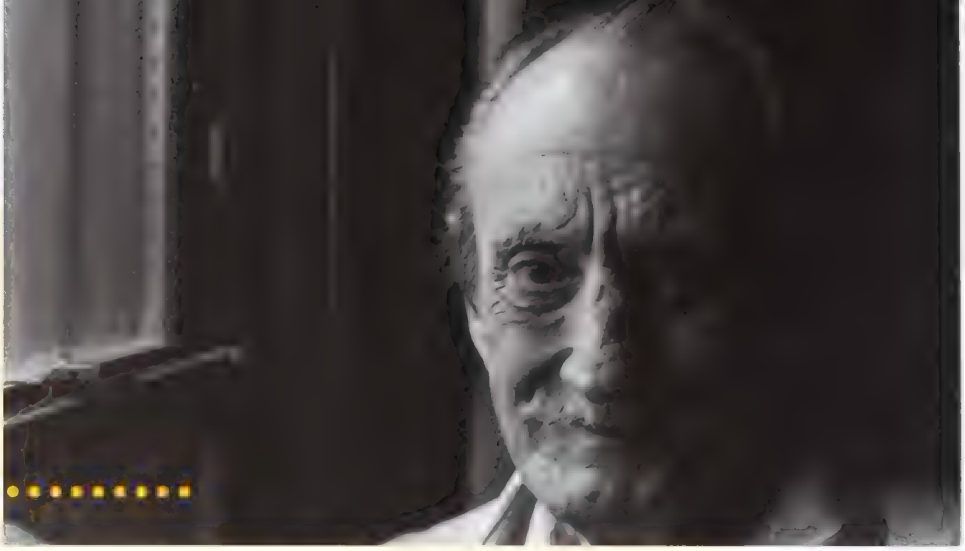
The clerk gave me a pitying look. "I'm afraid you're out of luck, honey. Those folks are long gone."

"Gone?"

"They're probably halfway to Florida by now," she said, "having their Christmas vacation. They do the same thing once or twice a year: bring the old lady in, saying she's been sick, and then hightail it out of here the moment your back is turned."

Scenes like this one are played out over and over again every day in emergency rooms all over the United States. So often, in fact, that the phenomenon has been given a name by the media: "granny dumping." The "dumpers" in this case were unusually benign. "Granny" looked like she was well-nourished and cared for, and the

The idea that a Christian might fail to provide for a parent was enough to make the apostle Paul explode with anger.



Jeffrey High

family did not apparently intend to abandon her forever. They had reached a point at which they needed a break from the ceaseless demands of caring for a demented elderly person, and having no other recourse, they simply parked her in the local hospital while they recuperated. They would take her on again as soon as they returned. The casual, almost insouciant manner in which they had unloaded their relative on us infuriated me at the time, but looking back on the incident I have to confess there was a certain bizarre sanity in their action, given the lack of any real alternatives.

Unwanted burden: Some, however, whether because they are more desperate or more callous, clearly intend to rid themselves of an unwanted burden forever. One spectacular incident that drew considerable media attention was the abandonment at a race track of a wheelchair-bound elderly man by his daughter, who then fled the state.

Abandonment is only one form of "elder abuse," a problem that is reaching epidemic proportions in the United States. Although statistics are hard to come by, it is thought that at least a million elderly people suffer some form of abuse every year. What kinds of abuse? Physical violence is the least common, though still all too prevalent. More commonly, abuse takes the forms of neglect, psychological abuse (repeated threats to send the elderly person to a nursing home, for example) and misuse of the elderly person's financial assets.

Predictably, the victims of such abuse are those who are most helpless: they often suffer from chronic physical illness, or more typically from a deterioration of mental function, usually as the result of Alzheimer's disease. There are several reasons these elderly in particular are vulnerable. First, they lack the ability to defend themselves. Second, they often behave in ways that make caring for them stressful in the extreme. They tend to wander and get lost, stay awake all night, easily lose their tempers or even strike out at their caretakers. They can be stubborn and uncooperative.

Those caring for Alzheimer's victims frequently find themselves frustrated and exhausted. But such people have long been with us. Formerly they were described as "senile" or in a "second childhood." Why then have we seen such a dramatic increase in the abuse of these patients over the past 20 years? Many factors have been cited in the literature on elder abuse, but in the main they can probably be boiled down to two.

The first is the decay of traditional family systems. The declining number of children in the nuclear family has resulted in fewer potential caregivers for elderly parents.

Furthermore, in our mobile society, children often move away from the parents and may be thousands of miles away when the need for care arises. The extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins once supporting the nuclear family has also disappeared to a large extent.

Frequently the adult child who is abusing his or her dependent parent is suffering from marital and financial difficulties.

Finally, in many instances "elder abuse" perpetuates a cycle of family violence in that abusive adult children have often suffered abuse at the hands of their parents.

Aggressive selfishness: The second factor, which has actually contributed greatly to the decay of the family and in fact strikes at the very notion of "family," is the increasing abandonment of the Judeo-Christian ethic in favor of an ethic of aggressive selfishness. In virtually all traditional cultures, from the Bushmen to the Chinese, it is a given that everyone must make sacrifices for their family members: parents for their children, and grown children in turn for their parents. But the biblical teachings of Judaism and Christianity in particular reinforce and even generalize that obligation: Not only within the family but in society as a whole the strong are to care for the weak, the rich are to give generously to the poor, the advantaged are to make sacrifices for the disadvantaged. How much more then should Christians be prepared to make sacrifices for their parents? The idea that a Christian might fail to provide for a parent was enough to make the apostle explode, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8).

Such exhortations find little resonance among those who have accepted the American religion of "looking out for number one." The message of self-fulfillment as one's primary responsibility is repeated incessantly on television, on the radio, in popular music, in newspapers and magazines, in advertising, in popular psychology, and all too often from the pulpit.

What should be obvious is that such an emphasis on self-fulfillment makes any deep relationship with another person impossible. After all, it is the outstanding characteristic of love that one is ready to sacrifice one's own interests for those of the beloved.

> ***We cannot shrink from our responsibility to our elderly without destroying the foundation on which a faithful church community is built: the love of God through the love of our brothers and sisters.***

Granted, one may feel fulfilled in doing so. It is nevertheless impossible to seek fulfillment as the principal reason for making such a sacrifice. For the moment such sacrifices fail to be fulfilling on some personal level, there is no longer any reason to make them. Sooner or later in any relationship will come a time for sacrifices that are not only unfulfilling but downright unpleasant. Only an incurable idealist who has never done it could imagine that there is any fulfillment in changing the diaper of a demented 80-year-old at 3 a.m. You do it because it needs to be done, not because it is fulfilling.

This cult of self-centeredness, then, reveals a deep unwillingness to accept responsibility. To those whose sole commitment is to their own personal "freedom," the notion that one is obligated to do something whether one likes it or not is profoundly distasteful. The results are to be seen everywhere in contemporary society, not only in "granny dumping" and other forms of elder abuse but also in casual sex, in no-commitment marriage and no-fault divorce, in runaway fathers who refuse to support the children they have deserted, in schools that seem unable to hold children to any standard of achievement or discipline, and in churches that emphasize good feelings while carefully avoiding the mention of sin and repentance.

Many solutions to this problem have been offered: more day-care facilities for the elderly, more aggressive detection and punishment of abusers, more and better nursing homes and more government expenditures with more layers of bureaucracy to administer more federal programs. All of these measures may be necessary and even helpful on a superficial level. But they do not begin to address the root of the problem.

True discipleship: A genuine solution must begin with the church. Only when the church recognizes how far it has fallen from obedience to Christ, only when the church makes a serious effort to return to true discipleship, can it speak out with credibility and authority to call the nation as a whole to repentance. Those in our midst who are shirking their responsibility toward their needy parents must be lovingly but firmly confronted with their sin, for they have, in Paul's words, "disowned the faith"—they cannot even be considered to be Christians.

At the same time the church must recognize how difficult it can be, financially, physically and emotionally, to care for a seriously disabled parent. We dare not sit in judgment on those who have been stressed beyond their limits when we have made no effort to help them in a meaningful way. If we are unwilling to help our brothers and sisters care for their elderly, we too have disowned the faith.

Such a resolve on the part of any church will be costly. The care of a seriously disoriented elderly person is a major undertaking. We cannot pretend that it is easy or painless. Such care requires a major investment of time, resources and money. Nevertheless, as Christians, we cannot shrink from our responsibility to our elderly without destroying the foundation on which a faithful church community is built: the love of God through the love of our brothers and sisters. And though it may seem incredible to a world that has identified human worth with youth, productiveness, health and intellect, these same brothers and sisters, hindered and "difficult" as they may sometimes be, can enrich and strengthen our lives, so that in caring for them we may be blessed by God.

Paul C. Fox is a medical doctor. This article is reprinted from The Plough, *Sept./Oct. 1992.*

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Once upon a time there was an old, old man whose eyes had grown dim, whose ears were deaf and whose knees trembled. When he sat at the table he could barely hold his spoon, so that his soup spilled on the tablecloth and some also dribbled from his mouth. His son and daughter-in-law were disgusted by this, so that in the end the old grandfather had to sit in the corner behind the oven, and they gave him his food in an earthen bowl, and not enough food at that. So he would sadly look over at the table, and his eyes would fill with tears. One day his trembling hands could not manage to hold on to the little bowl: it fell to the floor and broke. The young wife scolded him, but he said nothing, only sighed. Then they bought him a wooden bowl for a few pennies, and he had to eat out of that.

One day, as the family was sitting quietly, the little 4-year-old grandson began fitting some boards together on the floor. "What are you doing there?" asked the father. "I'm making a little trough," answered the child, "for Daddy and Mommy to eat from when I get big." The man and his wife looked at each other for a moment and wept. Immediately they brought the old grandfather to the table, and from then on they let him eat with them, and if he spilled a bit, they said not a word. *From Grimm's Fairy Tales*

THE REAL MEANING OF LOVE

A stranger who is at first an imposition becomes a friend sent by God.

Margaret Houk

A bustling nurse dropped the aged Lydia in my lap one afternoon at Memorial Hospital, and I wasn't too happy about it. I had my own problems.

Peter, my husband, was recuperating from recent hip surgery. That left me in charge of the house and three teenagers. We were discussing important family matters in the fourth-floor lounge when the nurse wheeled her burden into our circle of conversation.

"This is Lydia. She needs a change of scene. Doesn't get much company. You don't have to talk to her."

What an imposition! I didn't intend to. Not much, anyway. I know God tells us to care for the poor and elderly. In Deuteronomy 15:11, God says, "I command you to be open-handed toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land" (NIV).

But I was already busy with God-given responsibilities. Besides, what can a barely middle-aged woman say to an emaciated old stranger more than twice her years? We had nothing in common. Or so I thought.

Yet out of courtesy I introduced myself and Peter. I explained his surgery, briefly. Lydia said nothing.

Then I picked up the crochet work I had started as a busy-work project during my daily visits. My responsibility was over. I had tried. I turned back to talk family with Peter again, just as his physical therapy aide walked up to mount him on a cart and roll him away for his daily treatment.

Panic hit. Never good at small conversation with strangers, I felt awkward—and angry at the nurse who had pushed "her" burden off onto me. Nevertheless, I could not ignore the figure in the wheelchair facing me. I breathed deeply, praying, then looked up.

Broken shoulder: Under the shrunken, slightly hunched frame, I saw a woman who once must have had some stature. In spite of a broken, slinged shoulder, her bearing was tall, proud and stately.

Thin wisps of long, gray, braided hair framed warm brown eyes, a graceful nose, square-set jaws and lips pursed more from spunk (I learned later) than from age. She must have been a beautiful woman in her day, I said to myself.

I asked her if she ever crocheted in her earlier days?

Lydia opened up verbally at my query, her eyes admiring the interplay of oranges, yellows and browns in the shawl I was making. Through stroke-garbled language I grasped she had done much handwork in her youth.

We talked about family. I was surprised to learn I had met the daughter with whom Lydia lived. She had been my oldest child's English teacher a year earlier. Small world, I thought.

Lydia's infirm hand gripped a picture-covered pamphlet. I glanced at it, thinking to start a new line of conversation, then stopped, startled. The cover was identical to the one on the bulletin I'd received at church the day before.

My pastor had been up that morning, visiting Peter. He was delayed 20 minutes getting to Peter's room. Could it possibly be this was the relatively new member, Lydia, whom we had prayed for in church the day before?

Yes, it turned out Lydia was a member of my church. I knew by now God was trying to tell me something. Lydia needed a friend, and God had chosen me.

Thus began a year of visiting. I came to know this elderly stranger as a dear woman of noble aspiration, stubborn and determined disposition and

God was trying to tell me something. Lydia needed a friend, and God had chosen me.

Jeffrey High

kindly ways. I saw Lydia weekly through several weeks of nursing home convalescence, a circulatory ailment that returned her to the hospital, another convalescence at the home, a sudden reversal into a two-month coma that no one expected her to survive, then a rally that saw her sitting up in a chair one summer day, bright, perky and ready again (in her own words) to "take in laundry."

This latest, near-terminal illness took its toll, however. Lydia no longer remembered me. She was sleeping so often during the daytime hours that I called around mealtimes to be sure she was awake.

There wasn't much to talk about, either. She had forgotten our earlier bonds. I limited my visits to just a few minutes.

Nevertheless, she knew a friend was there. On one visit her eyes showed no sign of recognition, but a big tear filled one as I held up a rose for her to smell that I had brought from my garden.

The last time I saw her she was again asleep. Now that frost had taken the roses, I left her the latest church bulletin. If she couldn't appreciate the church news, she might at least enjoy the colorful autumn cover picture.

No get: Walking out of the nursing home, I wondered if it was worth it. Did my stopping in mean anything at all to Lydia anymore? It didn't seem so. For me it had become all give, no get. I wondered if my obligations were now over. If it meant nothing to her, why did I even need to bother?

Yesterday she died. Today I know. What had started out as a "Christian duty" had become something more. I cried when I heard the news.

Lydia is gone. She lived a long, full 87 years. And even in her last declining year God gave her something to give, something to live for.

She had taught someone the real meaning of love.

Margaret Houk lives in Appleton, Wis.

ALBUM

Janice Waltner Sevilla

In the album
her left hand rests
on his left hand—
matching gold bands—
pointed satin sleeve over
satiny smooth hand to
elegant tapered fingers
tipped with polished nails.

In the home
her left hand rests
on her right hand—
gold band on wrinkled flesh—
blue veins showing through
lined parchment skin.

In the lines she reads
her life story.

Janice Waltner Sevilla lives in Goessel, Kan.

GRANDMA TAKES GREEK

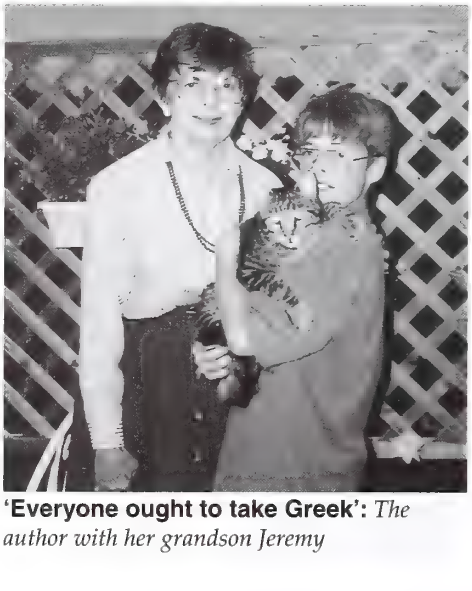
You're never too old to learn something new.

Elda Bachman

"Grandma, you can't go, people are dying of the heat in nearby Chicago." I, the grandma, felt loved by my caring grandson but went anyway to Elkhart, Ind., to take the class "Beginning Greek" at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in August 1995. Dale, my husband, also went and spent the month doing volunteer campus maintenance. He became a popular figure as he, with help, installed 15 window air conditioners in student housing. Ours was put in first as a test run. "Sure," the other hot students exclaimed, each one hoping that his or hers would be next.

"Why in the world did you do this?" a friend asked. Someone else could have asked, "Why didn't you learn to quilt instead?" I decided I wanted to do this a number of years ago when Gertrude Roten was teaching Greek and said to me, "Everyone ought to take Greek sometime in his or her life." This seemed to be my "sometime," after I had enjoyed and received credit for a number of Great Plains Seminary classes in the Newton-North Newton, Kan., area.

Going to class every morning with 12 diligent ministerial students was a reward in itself as we worked together in learning to translate 1 John from Greek into English. Jake Elias, the capable professor, and Pauline Bauman, the class assistant, led us each morning in singing the Lord's Prayer in Greek. The daily devotionals given by class members centered on 1 John and were a highlight for me as we looked to our text of study for daily meditation. The inspiration of 1 John came through to me both as the Word of God and as our Greek textbook. I envisioned each presenter as a future pastor. I had my turn and felt listened to as the grandma of the class.



'Everyone ought to take Greek': *The author with her grandson Jeremy*

'Pneumonia': Having a love for words, I was fascinated with English words that had roots in Greek. In 1 John we read "I write" or "I am writing" 12 times. "Grapho," the word for "I write," and "logos," meaning "the word," are examples. A few other English words coming from the Greek are pneumonia, stomach, genealogy, photograph, triangle, podiatry, matron, disciple and nocturne. "Poly," another one, is used as a prefix for numerous English words and means many. It could describe the benefits I received in the class.

According to the article "What We Now Know About Memory" by Lee Smith, one way to improve our memory is to exercise our brain. We may choose to hang out with challenging, fast-thinking company (which I did), or we may take on a new field of study, like accounting or a language. Smith writes that drugs may eventually prove to be an effective way to help remember things. Why wait for drugs to be tested and approved? After all, we could be exercising our memories right now by learning Chinese. I chose Greek.

The dear grandson who didn't want me to go because of the summer heat received a bonus. At one of our class coffee breaks we were served delicious cookies baked and shared by one of the ministerial students. Upon request he shared his mother's recipe with me. These "Greek cookies" more than satisfy Jeremy, and he is now as glad as I am that I took seminary Greek.

Elda Bachman is a member of First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., and lives in North Newton.

Letters

STORIES OF EVERYDAY PEOPLE

I find your magazine informative and interesting concerning religious articles and personal life stories of everyday people, despite our circumstances and situation. *Richard Allen Canape, Ely (Nev.) State Prison*

GOOD WILL TO ALL

The holiday season is fast approaching. I trust we can express "good will" to all of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us not be divided as "us and them," but let us unite as "we."

Since we do not know the cause of homosexuality (or heterosexuality), we as believers should find peace worshiping together as a community sharing our joy and pain, our walk in our faith. Let us not use different yardsticks to measure our values and achievements, as society does the heterosexual, and only on "sex" with the homosexual. Some of the letters written to our church papers this past year are very judgmental. In fact, the writers judged more harshly than God.

Snide comments, such as, "God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve," promote a hateful attitude and breed contempt. We are also informed to "love the sinner but hate the sin." Sadly, the gay community has not experienced much of that love, not even from the church. Yes, we quote Scripture to enforce our prejudices but fail to mention that people who pick up firewood on the Sabbath (Numbers 15:32-26) or those who dispute the priest (pastor) (Deuteronomy 17:12) are to be put to death. There is more than one way to read, more than one way to process and study, and more than one way to interpret the biblical writings.

I would suggest that we study the Scripture involving both straight and gays. We need to learn how to speak to each other, listen, ponder together what does this really mean? Biblical words remain the same, but the meaning may be radically different. Let us spend more time on what unites us, not on division. We are all created in God's image, our personalities mirror God's likeness. Our inclusiveness will help us become less prejudiced, often based on ignorance and fear, even though we may feel it is "sanctified."

Let's turn off the television preachers who use gay-bashing as a method of obtaining funding. These men who will not take time out to meet with their gay sisters and brothers one-to-one—would they be that insensitive if they had a gay child or grandchild? Do you who write letters know someone who is gay? How would you want the church to treat you if you were gay? We need to ask hard questions and spend much more time in discernment rather than judgment.

Our libraries have wonderful books on this subject and there are many enlightening books in our bookstores. We need to commit ourselves to find the truth, seek justice and above all show love as Christ commanded us to. Let us not silence our church leaders but encourage them to dialogue much more with our gay brothers and sisters. We need resources and book reviews on both sides of the issues in our papers. Encourage parents of gays and lesbians to meet with our small groups or Sunday school classes. We need to hear something else other than the hate rhetoric that bombards us. It takes courage to be responsible and to find the truth. It is that which makes us free. *Ella Judy Harnly, Manheim, Pa.*

Bible

The breath of God

We need a rebirth of interest in and attention to the Holy Spirit.

Darrell Fast

Christians believe in a God who is three-in-one. This Trinitarian faith is distinctively Christian. It is suggested in the Scriptures. It was clarified over time in the early church. But it remains a mystery. So it is a point of reference for us in our confession of faith and also a challenge for theological reflection.

Douglas Ottati, who teaches theology and ethics at Union Seminary in Virginia, wrote in *The Christian Century* about the centrality and relevance of a Trinitarian faith in which, among other things, he makes the point that Trinitarian thinking is a corrective to a variety of unitarianisms. He identifies three kinds we should avoid.

First, there is "unitarianism of the Father." Here faith tends to become an intellectual quest for the divine presence in the universe. But there are no specific demands for repentance and commitment in real life. Often this is called deism.

Second, there is "unitarianism of the Son," where faith focuses so much on the human response of discipleship that God's power and presence in the world are overlooked. Following Jesus becomes a legalistic emphasis, a "super-discipleship" that defines a distinct and separate community. It usually leads to a collective blindness about human corruption, which is inevitable within any community.

I wonder if Douglas Ottati was thinking about Mennonites in this description. Couldn't this be a picture of our tendency to unitarianism? I suspect that we are vulnerable here. Our heritage of Christian faith challenges us to be disciples at any cost. We believe in costly grace and become so afraid of cheap grace that we often fail to perceive God's gracious mercy at work all around us.

In the July 16 issue of *Gospel Herald* was a lead article about Paul's letter to the Galatians. Some Jewish Christians in Galatia believed that Gentiles should become Jews as part of the conversion experience. Paul confronted these legalists with a gospel of liberation. With the Spirit of God at work in us, producing the fruit of the Spirit, we are free from the law and can do whatever we want. That scared some people then—and now, too.

In this transition, Paul was not reducing the number of sins so much as enlarging the scope of God's grace to forgive and of God's Spirit to empower. Then the author makes this application to the current longing among many Mennonites for the good old days when sin was sin and we weren't afraid to name it.

When God's grace is being expanded on the human horizon, there is much for which to be grateful. Such a perspective on grace should help us, as congregation or conference, for example, as we seek to find our way through the troubled waters that swirl around the issue of homosexuality. We are all recipients of the unconditional love of God. We are all sinners in need of God's grace in Christ Jesus. The breath of God is working where it wills in us all.

But there is a third unitarianism—the "unitarianism of the Spirit." Here the faith perspective concentrates on personal experiences of healing and renewal, at the expense of God's love for the whole world and the particularity of following Jesus in everyday life. This unitarianism results in an "inward, somewhat amorphous spirituality," a therapeutic stance in which institutions and communities are incidental means to personal growth and fulfillment. Some forms of pietism, or New Age spirituality, fit this picture.

Inclusive, intentional and interactive: As I think about these three sketches, I discern the different tendencies within the Christian church that threaten to pull us apart. And yet, historic Christianity has affirmed all three dimensions as essential to our faith in a God who is three-in-one. We are called to be responsible for the world God created. We are called to discipleship. We are called to renewal from within by allowing the breath of God to do its work in us. In this response to a threefold dynamic resides Christian faithfulness and new life. In this Trinitarian faith lies our uniqueness and our unity as a community of faith—inclusive, intentional and interactive.

But this is about the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, the immortal and invisible God, the God who works without being seen, sometimes described as a dove.

We have not made things any easier for us or our children by our use of the term Holy Ghost—"spook!" Bill Keane, the cartoonist, made his own statement about the Holy Ghost in *The Family Circus*. A child is poised to baptize her doll in the toilet bowl: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and into the hole you goes."

For too long we have consigned the Holy Spirit to a spooky world, out on the fringes beyond the realm of what is safe, tangible and predictable. We have neglected the power inherent in the third person of the triune God. The Holy Spirit is too important to be left to the enthusiasts and the exotic excesses of those who speak in tongues. For one thing, in the Book of Acts, the experience of speaking in tongues has included both kinds of language, human and divine. On the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on the disciples, everyone understood them speaking in their native tongues. The miracle was as much the experience of understanding as the languages being spoken.

For too long we have consigned the Holy Spirit to a spooky world, out on the fringes beyond the realm of what is safe, tangible and predictable. We have neglected the power inherent in the third person of the triune God.

So we would acknowledge that there is (and ought to be) a rebirth of interest in and attention to the Holy Spirit. This renewed emphasis is reflected in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. It used to be (in the "old days" of the rust-colored *Mennonite Hymnal*) that we had one section of 13 hymns to choose from under "The Holy Spirit." Now we have a plethora of songs and hymns and chants under several topics: Gifts of the Spirit, Movement of the Holy Spirit, Power of the Holy Spirit and Presence of the Holy Spirit. We are beginning to recover a conviction about the importance of the Spirit of God in the Christian life. We are becoming like the fish who become aware of water. The breath of God is as near as and as essential to life as the air we breathe. We have come to realize anew that there are important realities that are not subject to the laws of empirical science.

Our Confession of Faith reminds us that the Spirit of God is God's presence and power active in the world. The Spirit of God was present at creation like a wind that swept over the face of the formless void. The breath of God continues to act in the creative process throughout the world in expected and unexpected ways.

A reliable guide: The New Testament announces that since the resurrection of Jesus we are living in the age of the Spirit. The Spirit's presence is now seen as universal and inclusive, poured out on all human beings—male and female, young and old, slave and free, people from all ethnicities. As individual Christians and as communities of faith, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the giver of gifts to the church for the growth and well-being of the whole community. The Spirit of Christ is often used interchangeably with the Holy Spirit, linking the former with the latter to give us a reliable guide in faith and life.

Today there is also a renewed appreciation for the anointing of the Spirit. It is unfortunate that this rite of anointing has been associated almost exclusively with sickness and death. Initially the ceremony of anointing with oil was a dramatization of the presence of God's Spirit. When Samuel anointed David the shepherd boy as the future king we read, "and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:13).

As our Vision: Healing and Hope statement says, "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

Darrell Fast is pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., and moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Learning to pray

Create a calendar of prayer

Schedules help us be more faithful in our praying.

Marlene Kropf

This is the time of year when we take down old calendars and hang new ones. Faced with the fresh possibilities of a new year, we resolve to bring order and vitality into our lives. One area in which many of us long to be renewed is in our life of prayer.

In the book *Simple Prayer*, John Dalrymple says, "The truth is that we only learn to pray all the time everywhere after we have resolutely set about praying some of the time somewhere." Though some people seem to get by with a spontaneous approach in which prayers are flung toward God at odd moments of the day, most of us find that a genuine life of prayer demands some discipline. To truly listen to God and bring our heart's deepest desires to God requires an investment of time and love.

One of the things I have learned about disciplined physical exercise is that I am much more likely to maintain my routine if I mark on a calendar the number of miles I walk. When I glance at the calendar and see that I have only walked eight or 10 miles in a particular week, I am motivated to get outside a couple more days to reach my weekly goal. Perhaps if we found ways to keep tabs on our life of prayer, we might be more faithful to our commitments. Though we desire intimacy with God, it is incredibly easy for prayer to be squeezed out of a busy day's activities.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

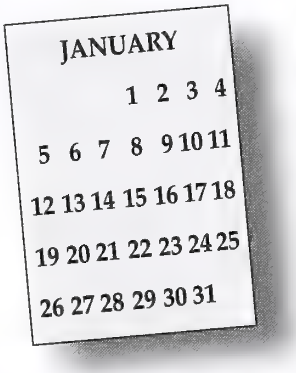
Another arena for growth in prayer may occur in congregational worship. As I travel in the church, I am sometimes disturbed by the scarcity of prayer on Sunday morning. I'm also uneasy at times with the focus of our prayers. One of the pervasive sins of late 20th-century North America is our individualism. In ways we hardly even realize, we function as though the world revolves around us and our needs and interests. Such attitudes spill over even into congregational prayer. Perhaps the discipline of a congregational calendar of prayer might begin to widen our circle of care and commitment.

Thanksgiving and intercession: At Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship in New York City, the congregation follows a carefully designed prayer cycle. Two prayer lists are used: one to help members share responsibility for their own church life and another to give them a stake in the life of the larger Christian church. Both prayers of thanksgiving and intercession are offered. Some examples from a recent summer cycle are the following:

1. Thanksgiving for
    - steady spiritual and numerical growth in Slavic, Hispanic and Asian congregations in North America,
    - Mennonite initiatives in starting a coalition for conscientious objection in Colombia,
    - A blossoming partnership between Mennonite missionaries and African Independent Churches in Bible instruction in Botswana,
    - the ecumenical spirit among churches in Canada,
    - slow but steady healing and reconciliation in Cambodian society,
    - church planting initiatives in Indonesia;
2. Intercession for
    - the 1997 Mennonite World Conference in India, for mutuality and a spirit of openness to gifts from churches in other countries,
    - conflict mediation by moderate Muslims and Christians in Nigeria,
    - a growing thirst among Copts in Egypt to know the Bible,
    - churches in the United States to overcome racism and contribute to healing in city life,
    - church-run mental health and street children programs in Paraguay,
    - Mennonite Central Committee programs in soil conservation and reforestation in Haiti.

One of the ways we love others is by praying for them. When we discipline ourselves to pray regularly for those in our own congregation, for churches in our area conference, for the church around the world and for other needs, we join the flow of God's love and participate in the coming-to-be of the reign of God. An additional way of connecting with our sisters and brothers worldwide is to invite someone in the congregation who speaks a foreign language to offer prayers on behalf of that region. Thus we are shaped and formed by the practice of prayer into people who more fully reflect the love of Christ in the world.

How about it? Do we need a calendar of prayer? Perhaps 1997 will be the year to try such a discipline.



> ***One of the pervasive sins of late 20th-century North America is our individualism. In ways we hardly even realize, we function as though the world revolves around us and our needs and interests. Such attitudes spill over even into congregational prayer.***

Commentary

Walking the bridge

Lessons from a seminar on the work of the United Nations

Melinda Shirey

What role should the United States play in a global community? What role should I have in that global community, as a Mennonite and as a Christian?

These were the questions at the front of my mind as I packed my bags and boarded the plane to go to New York to a three-day student seminar titled "Walking the Bridge: A Look at United Nations Peace-Building and Development Work from a Mennonite Perspective."

The seminar, sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) United Nations office in New York City, was designed to expose college students to the United Nations and to the issues of international relations, development and peace-building. A key theme was the role of Christians in relating to powerful institutions and in promoting forgiveness. Being in the halls of the U.N. complex where representatives from around the world make decisions for peace was moving.

In a role play, each seminar participant became the U.N. representative of a country and had the task of proposing a budget (including consequences for nonpayment) for the U.N. We spent hours "negotiating" and struggled to agree on one proposal. I see now why the U.N. is criticized for its bureaucracy; I also recognized the importance of acknowledging the values and needs each nation-state brings to the negotiating table when the U.N. tries to reach consensus.

International relations: I learned how much the U.N. is committed to preserving human rights and providing development, humanitarian and refugee aid to needy people in the world. One of my prayers during the seminar was, "Lord, open my eyes to your heart for the world and give me your vision for a people whom you dearly love."

Development: Selim Jahan, of the U.N. Development Program, described the "Human Development Report Index" that ranks U.N. member states by their developments in health, knowledge and wealth. This report, by a team of analysts, forces nations to recognize the urgency of human need and suggests ways to help countries grow.

Jahan defined growth as "enlarging people's choices." He said, "Growth in and of itself is not an end but must enhance the quality of life and involve participation."

Peace-building: As we talked about world events and the use of U.N. troops to "bring peace," I struggled to reconcile my pacifist beliefs with the image of U.N. troops as a world police force. "Oh Lord, can't we stop con-flict without using violent means?" I prayed. I see the tremendous relief U.N. soldiers bring when they keep people from brutally murdering each other. Couldn't Christians do something to resolve the conflict that led to violence in the first place?

> ***I want to be an advocate for forgiveness, to repent on behalf of the United States for our materialism and abuses of power and to be one who seeks the interests of the kingdom of God, not just those of one nation.***

Relating to powerful institutions: I was inspired by three MCC workers who spoke about their grassroots experiences interacting with governments overseas. Arli Klassen described the distinctive role MCC played in Lesotho, where MCC challenged the studies and plans of a World Bank dam project, a stance that clearly pitted them against a powerful international institution.

I am often frustrated that white Americans are given so much persuasive power in the world; I was encouraged to see how MCC workers use their influence to promote justice.

Forgiveness: Every morning John Rempel, MCC liaison to the U.N., led a devotional about a different aspect of forgiveness. I believe forgiveness is the way to heal conflict in this world. How can the U.N. and nongovernmental organizations promote healing internationally?

Barry Hart, a Mennonite working for CARE International, talked about how healing needs to happen at both the individual and group levels. Healing happens by helping people work through feelings of vulnerability, anger, loss and injustice, by restoring relationships broken down by conflict and violence, Hart said. Hart works in conflict resolution and trauma healing in Croatia.

I want to be an advocate for forgiveness, to repent on behalf of the United States for our materialism and abuses of power and to be one who seeks the interests of the kingdom of God, not just those of one nation. "Lord, please help us accept and use the responsibility of leadership wisely," I prayed.

I came away encouraged. I learned a tremendous amount about the role of the United States in the world and how the U.N. relates to nation-states. Rather than answering my questions, though, the seminar brought new ones to mind, particularly about my role in the world as a Christian and as an advocate for the kingdom of God. I don't want to come away merely enlightened; I want to respond, to act in ways that reflect kingdom values.

Twenty-six students attended the seminar. They came from colleges in the United States and Canada including Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College. Staff from the MCC offices in Akron, Pa.; Ottawa, and Washington also participated and served as resource people.

Melinda (Mindy) Shirey, Fresno, Calif., is a member of Butler Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church in Fresno. Rebecca Kauffman, Bluesky, Alta., an intern in the Mennonite Central Committee United Nations office and a member of Bluesky Mennonite Church, also contributed to the story.

WM

THE Mennonite

December 24, 1996

WINDOW TO MISSION

Discipleship

in Mississippi - page 4
at the Hermitage - page 6

> *. . . and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?* Micah 6:8

CONTENTS

3 **Riddles from Mary**
by Suzanne Lawrence

4 **It was the praying that got us through**
by Sara F. Miller

6 **Waiting for Daybreak**
by Mary Herr

8 **Resources for you**

9 **Journey thoughts**
by Bek Linsenmeyer

10 **The magic of being weak**
by Jill Rae Russell

11 **Feeding Christ in Atlanta**
by Maria Boehm

12 **Coming into God's family through the kindergarten door**
by Lety Garcia

13 **WM memories**
by Naomi Lehman

14 **Roundtable**
by Susan Jantzen

15 **Facts & figures**
by Susan Jantzen

16 **Window shopping**

Cover credit: Louise Wideman. *Sara Miller surrounded by daycare and foster children*

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Riddles from Mary

by Suzanne Lawrence

Rock your children to riddle songs.
What once seemed right may now seem wrong.
Children leave home to find their own.
Shelter yourself in riddle songs.

I lost my honor when I was young.
I have found my honor in having none.
In His father's house, I lost my son.
I have found my family by losing one.

An angel's riddles brought me hope.
I sang and danced with my womenfolk.
The prophet saw a sword in my soul.
Why does piercing make me whole?

I stretched and stretched for a child to grow.
(Stretch to purpose. Let it go.)
I am stretched again—does anyone know
the mother of God needs redemption? So,

I live with riddles to pass along
to my hundred times children and siblings, none
of whom have lived through birth only once.
We name each other blessed one.

Suzanne Lawrence, writer of the WM/WMSC Bible study *Called into God's Family,* lives and works in Goessel, Kan.

by Sara F. Miller

Andrew and I started our married life in 1942, working for farmers near Goshen, Ind., in a conscientious-objector approved job. We had little to start with—a small table, a bench, a bed, cooking utensils, several spoons.

Our first farm was near LaGrange, Ind. We worked hard, paid for our little farm and enjoyed our sons, Larry and Kenneth. We were a happy Amish family but something was missing in our lives.

Our Mennonite neighbors invited us to come to their church revival meetings. We tied our horse and buggy up under the trees and listened to the message of God. We desired to seek a deeper relationship with God.

Later at the Brunk revival tent meetings we memorized Jeremiah 33:3. ("We called to God and God answered our call.") We began to see the need to be involved in God's mission work.

But we were busy farmers, living on 80 acres of the most beautiful farm land in Eden Township, near Topeka, Ind. We thought that this piece of God's wonderful earth was to be our home always. It was our dream come true.

Along with others from our church we became involved in a church planting effort in Dowagiac, Mich. Our sons left home for voluntary service. We realized that God had other things for us to do besides living in his Eden. "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them" (Luke 18:16) became real to us as we saw needs beyond Eden Township. We left our beautiful little homestead in 1968 and moved to Noxubee County, Miss. We were only going for a few years. We'd be back after we served God for a while.

Our home in Mashulaville, Miss., was an old, but stately, brick dormitory. In the late 1960s there were many Choctaw Indian children neglected because of parental alcohol abuse. Children were removed from their families by court order. Our home became a children's home. As many as 18 children were with us at times.

Six white children we had helped raise in Indiana came with us to Mississippi. They, too, suffered from abuse and neglect.

It was the prayi

The local community began to question our caring for children in an interracial setting. People threatened to kill us and bomb our 21-room home. We were scared, but we were too busy washing diapers, cooking meals, providing chores, going to church and caring for the children to become dismayed. And we prayed—it was the praying that got us through it all. The '60s were hard times for change makers in Mississippi. We were cursed and harassed, on the phone and in person. Law enforcement officers and social service agencies who should have cared were the ones who worried us most.

We were taken to court on false charges. We were investigated and worn out but we didn't give up. God always stood with us. A prominent Southern lady owned our house. She never took our side but she never condemned us. That's probably why our house was untouched.

at got us through

For many years I worked as a daycare director for the Mashulaville community's preschool children. Those children are almost all grown folks now with children of their own.

Andrew started a limited resource farmer's cooperative, growing vegetables, raising animals and interacting with farm people here.

When we first moved here, our church was uncertain about what it would mean to have different races together for worship, so we worshiped in other churches. We became a part of the Fellowship of Hope Community Church in Macon, Miss. Here we found the comfortable feeling of belonging without fear of reprisals. That church building was burned by an arsonist in 1987. With lots of volunteer help a new church building was erected. Our church is still small, but it does bring people to the light of God's love.

The county we live in still has much racial separation. Most of our involvements are with our black and Indian neighbors and our family. It is hard to be close to everyone if you take a position on justice issues.

But God's love is for everyone. If we fear others more than God, what is the use of our salvation? We finally have to stand for the right, there is no other way to go.

Our foster children come back to see us. The many temporary care cases we had for delinquent teenagers now come back to share with us. We always have company.

"The Lord is near to all who call on him" (Psalm 145:18), has been true throughout my life. Whether I am visiting the older people around me, picking okra in the itchy jungle of vegetation, counseling my troubled grandson, putting on a bandage, holding the babies that visit us, I am reminded that God's ways are the best. I thank the Lord for having given me a good life, a different one than I could ever have imagined, but a very good life.

Sara Miller and her husband, Andrew, now retired, live in Mashulaville, Miss., and are members of Fellowship of Hope Community Church, Macon, Miss.

Waiting for Daybreak

by Mary Herr

At the end of the year as a junior-high language arts teacher, I thought a silent retreat would be a restful place to recuperate from the year's stress. At the first gathering of the retreat we were instructed to let go of our agenda and "to listen to God."

So I tried. I didn't hear anything I thought came from God. In the last hours of the retreat, I became aware that my prayers had always been a monologue. I had no way of comprehending how to recognize God's voice. That "divine nudge" was the beginning of listening prayer. Following "divine nudges" is not always comfortable or easy. Sometimes what one hears demands sacrifice and risk taking, yet joy seems to accompany that journey.

We lived with another nudge for more than 15 years. It was to create a place of prayer for pastors and spouses. Gene and I were attending a leadership conference where we were instructed to dream about the future, what we'd like to do, and what we sensed God to be calling us to. We were in different groups, but came out of that time hearing the same message.

Living with a call that long was not easy. Yet we sensed all those waiting years were preparation. Often in my journal there were cries of How long? and Will we ever be able to pursue this call? Does anyone care if we *do* follow this dream?

We tried to candidate in several churches during that time, but always knew we were to wait.

When we were asked to design and lead a formation/discipleship program for young adults in a voluntary service setting, we sensed this was to be a preparation. Those five years in Phoenix were formative for us. We were able to companion young people seeking to grow and know God in a new and deeper way.

After those years in Phoenix, we returned to Elkhart, Ind. I had a position as an administrator with Mennonite Board of Missions and Gene was a house husband. During that time, people came to him and asked for space in our home for retreat and spiritual direction. The Hermitage was born.

"One's gifts and call will make room for you" we heard from the books of Elizabeth O'Connor of the Church of the Saviour in Washington.

After two years I resigned, because my heart was more with the ministry of retreat and spiritual direction. We had two guest rooms in our basement, a library and a small chapel. The cost of letting go of a salary was one of sheer faith. There was no promise of a regular income.

A mission group surrounded us with prayer, love and some material support. Out of that group a call was sounded to create a place in the country to pray. When we moved to the country, the mission group disbanded and we were left alone to decide whether we could trust God to meet us in a move to Three Rivers, Mich., 34 miles from Goshen/Elkhart, Ind.

We did go to agencies to test our call and to see if there might be those who wanted to support this ministry. Again, we sensed that we had to be faithful to our call when the responses were negative because no finances were available.

With a leap of faith, we purchased a 65-acre farm that had a modular (a euphemism for a trailer) and an old barn, along with woods and a few tillable acres.

I resisted living in a modular because it seemed like a step down from a real house. It came to me at a later time, when we were living in it, that the call was not for a house, but for a place and space where people would come to be alone in the quiet with God.

After about 10 years the barn had been made into a four-story retreat place, and there were three small hermitages being used in the woods. We were again drawn to believe that we were to build a house for us. Our home, Daybreak, is pure gift, light, airy, spacious, a place to retreat to.

A question we often ask ourselves is "What about our work is life-giving?" And the opposite of that is "What takes life from us?" We know we are in the right place. We are doing what we've been called to do. There are tasks we need to let go of at times, but when we do, others seem to come alongside to help.

Recently while on retreat, I was drawn to spend time in thanks and gratefulness. The people who have helped to shape The Hermitage with volunteer hours of labor, prayerful intercessions, meal preparation, gardening and lawn care, crossed my mind like a video. I was awed as I jotted down names. The list reaches beyond 70 now and is still growing. God is faithful.

A basic affirmation we've used is a quote from Julian of Norwich:

"And all shall be well
and all manner of thing shall be well
and we shall see it."

Mary Herr and her husband, Gene, live at The Hermitage, a retreat center near Three Rivers, Mich.

RESOURCES FOR YOU

Godward: Personal Stories of Grace edited by Ted Koontz (Herald Press, 1996, paperback, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.). Read their own stories as told by 24 Anabaptist leaders. Editor Ted Koontz writes, "My central hope for this book is that it will encourage reflection and telling of stories ... in whatever way *Godward* is used, I hope the book helps readers have 'eyes to see' and 'ears to hear' God's coming."

Plain and Simple: A Woman's Journey to the Amish by Sue Bender (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991, paperback, $14 U.S./$19.50 Cdn.). Amish quilts introduced Bender to a community where "No one rushed. Each step was done with care. There was no rushing to finish so they could get on to the 'important things.' For them, it was all important." Living with an Amish family, Bender "found (her) way home."

Simple Wonders: The Disarming Pleasure of Looking Beyond the Seen by Christopher De Vinck (Zondervan, 1995, $12.99 U.S./$17.99 Cdn.). To be aware of the call of God in the stuff of everyday life is our desire. De Vinck shares that awareness with us in this fine devotional book.

Stories of the Heart compiled by Alice Gray (Vision House Publications, 1996, paperback, $10.99 U.S.). Alice Gray has compiled 110 stories by popular authors, among them Max Lucado, Kay Arthur, Tony Compolo, Becky Pippert and Barbara Johnson. Including both fiction and nonfiction, these stories are meant to encourage your soul.

The Ragamuffin Gospel: Embracing the Unconditional Love of God by Brennan Manning (Multnomah Books, 1990, paperback, $9.99 U.S.). Manning states that the *Ragamuffin Gospel* is not for the superspiritual. It is for the bedraggled, beat up and burnt out. It is written for "anyone who has grown weary and discouraged along the way." Weaving many stories into his message, Manning writes refreshingly of God's grace.

Where the Wild Strawberries Grow: Nurturing Your Marriage in the Briar Patches of Life by David and Claudia Arp (Chariot Victor Publishing, 1996, paperback, $16.99 U.S.). Containing 50 brief chapters, these authors and columnists for *Christian Parenting Today* write humorously out of their 32 years of marriage and experience helping families.

Journey thoughts

And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

This is not the editorial I turned in to Faith & Life Press before our staff went to the fall Women in Mission/Women's Missionary and Service Commission meeting in Markham, Ill., where we worked three days on integration issues. Back home, as I walked down our country road on a gray Monday morning, I realized tears were dripping onto my jacket. Later as I ate my lunch I again realized I was crying. My husband came in and wanted to know what was wrong. The simplest explanation was "sin."

At our meeting we wrestled with the financial costs of a larger executive which would include African-American, Hispanic and Native Americans. Although I was uncomfortable with some of this discussion, I said nothing. Since I was not part of the solution, I was part of the problem.

With great courage one Hispanic woman told us how it felt to have been "missionized" but to not feel truly welcome in our church. Contrite, we prayed together.

Debby Boone says even a kindergartener knows what justice is: "We share the blocks. If one of us gets juice, we all do." In an analagous way, I want our women's organization to act justly. If that means we who have much will have to help others come to the table, I suggest we reflect on who gave us the resources to begin with. I want our organization to show the kind of love that was willing to die outside of the city for our sakes (Hebrews 13:12,13). I want our organization to not make excuses but to make sacrifices.

As I walked down the road that Monday a song came to mind: "He didn't bring us this far to leave us." I believe God brought that song to mind. For WM and WMSC, I believe that he who began this good work is faithful to complete it.

I am thankful God used our sisters to hold us accountable.

Bek Linsenmeyer is now in her fifth year as editor for *Window to Mission.* Bek and her family live near Inman, Kan.

The magic of being weak

by Jill Rae Russell

A year ago I came to San Francisco to be a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) worker at a residence for people with AIDS (PWAs). When I left my hometown of Orillia, Ont., I had little money and even less of an idea of what I was actually going to be doing. I had just graduated with a degree in psychology and was undergoing deep relationship and religious questions. I was disillusioned, angry and confused.

While finding respite in a convent in Nazareth, Ky., in July, I reread MVS placement possibilities. As I flipped through the pages my eyes rested on the two groups working with PWAs, in San Francisco and New York. I had no experience caring for PWAs and no more than an average understanding of the disease. But I had worked with Helping Hands, caring for elderly and terminally ill people, and focused on Alzheimer's disease in my undergraduate studies. I was reminded of my grandmother's battle with Alzheimer's disease and the deep alienation she felt from the people around her and from her very self. I had seen the loneliness and isolation of disease. Many of the young men and women with AIDS were probably estranged from their families, abandoned by friends and lovers and undoubtedly shamed by society. I did not pretend to experience the depths of their alienation. However, in that quiet, weak moment, I felt the loneliness of my heart calling out to them, "I belong to you, I belong with you."

Immediately I wrote the MVS office a postcard asking for more information about the placement. Driving back to Canada, I had much time to think . My first feelings of call felt confirmed.

Now, after one year of caring for (or maybe just being with) PWAs I am certain that I wasn't crazy to trust myself in that quiet moment in a convent in Kentucky. For it was in that blessed moment of grace that a year of redemption came. The love I have received from my brothers and sisters with AIDS reminded me of God's insurmountable presence in the face of sorrow and weakness. I like to think of the gospel as "God's spell" on all of us. After all, what could be more magical than to believe that we find life abundantly in the midst of our own weakness?

Jill Rae Russell is currently working with Mennonite Voluntary Service in San Francisco. Her home church is Orillia (Ont.) Christian and Missionary Alliance.

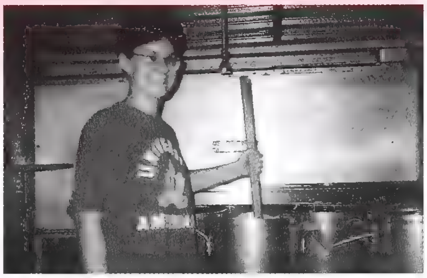
Your contributions through WM help support the work of the Commission on Home Ministries.

Feeding Christ in Atlanta

by Maria Boehm

At first it confounded me. The rhythmic beeps did not make sense in the rest of my dream. As I rode the waves to consciousness, I discovered it was the sound of my alarm. Suddenly, it all became clear. Although it was still dark, it was time to rise and cook the grits for breakfast. What could be more important than cooking enough eggs and grits for 300? Writing papers and exams can't be more important than feeding the Christ who sleeps on the streets of Atlanta longing for the heat and weight of grits to fill the empty well of his stomach.

Discipleship is hard. One must wade through oceans of myths and expectations to find truth. It is a dance between the "straight and narrow" and the "big wide open."



Maria Boehm is shown here cooking grits in Atlanta. Maria is now in her final year at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

This dance of discipleship took me to the Open Door Community in Atlanta. This is an intentional Christian community which befriends the homeless of Atlanta and lives in solidarity with them. They serve breakfast six days a week, run a soup kitchen four days a week, provide showers and a complete change of clothes for at least 50 people three days a week. The house is open every day so that people can get mail, a clean T-shirt or a toothbrush. Once a month they organize vans for the two-hour drive to the state prison. Families can go to visit husbands, sons and fathers who are in prison. This community is a living example of Matthew 25.

The dance of discipleship and faithfulness is one that I have been trying to learn for a long time. It is a dance that people have been trying to figure out since the Old Testament. I believe that my baptism was the real beginning of my commitment to this dance of discipleship and faithfulness. It has led me to places like Montreal to serve seniors and the homeless, to Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg to study so that I am grounded in the Bible and history of the church.

While in Atlanta this summer, I discovered that discipleship means thinking about where one lives, who one lives with, what one does and even what one eats. I awoke to the fact that faithfulness takes a lot of consciousness. I also learned how to cook grits.

Maria's nurture in her local congregation has shaped and influenced her life choices. The Commission on Education supplies resources to her church, St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Coming into God's family through the kindergarten door

by Lety Garcia

Some might say I came into the Mennonite church by a chance encounter. I am Noemi Leticia Jiminez Garcia. I am 35, wife and mother of two, a kindergarten teacher and a law student. Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) worker Vicente Minino approached me about allowing a visiting medical/dental team from Canada use the facility of a kindergarten I run. In May of 1995 as I learned to know Vicente Minino and the Canadian young people, God came into my heart. From that moment, following their example, I began my discipleship journey. I discovered anew the values taught by my childhood teachers.

Before I permitted God to enter into my heart, I did not know the fullness of life. I lived as one who was ill. Through discipleship my emotional life has been healed. The life in Christ has made me know that God can use my talents to help many people who need what God has so freely given to me.

I have also learned that the most constructive power is love. With love I have been able to see my family accept Christ as Savior and Lord. Now my husband, my children and I are learning how to love our God with our whole heart, soul and mind.

When I am teaching in the kindergarten, Jardin de Ninos, my hope is that I may be able to instill in each child much of what my pastors have taught me. During the eight years that I have worked with children I have learned to look through their eyes and feel as they feel and love them. They are for me the most beautiful part of God's creation.

When I am in the university classroom, all that I study and learn relates to my desire to fulfill God's will in my life. My dreams and hopes have not changed much, but now I live to please God. From the time I get up in the morning until I lie down at night I see each day as a gift of God's grace. My greatest desire is to serve God by serving my neighbor.

I ask especially that you pray that my life may be a real and living testimony every day in order that the glory of God may increase in the world. My prayers to God will express my gratitude to him for your attention and your kindness in reading my letter.

Lety Garcia shares her testimony in the Coyoacan Church, Mexico City.

WM dollars go to support the Commission on Overseas Mission work in Mexico City.

WM memories

by Naomi Lehman

Naomi Lehman went to the Junior Mission Band as a little girl in the 1920s. As a young married woman Naomi joined her mother in attending Women's Mission Society. Here are excerpts from her delightful reminiscence letter.

In the mid '60s I became District Adviser for Central District, a wonderful learning experience. I began to see what Women's Missionary Association (WMA) was all about through visiting some of the societies and going to council meetings in Newton each year.

The day I came home, after my seventh and last meeting in Newton, there was a letter for me. Recognizing the return address, I slapped the letter down on the desk, exclaiming to my daughter, "If this is what I think it is, the answer is 'no!'" Just as I said that, the hymn "All for Jesus" began on the record player. I think that hymn was God's way of speaking to me. With tears I opened the letter, and sure enough, it was from the nominating committee asking for permission to place my name on the WMA ballot for president. I was elected to begin seven more years of service for God through WMA (which later became Women in Mission).

Women in Mission (WM) gave financial support to commission, seminary and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission boards. We thought we should also have representation, but nothing happened to our suggestion. The WM council strongly felt that we should *insist* on representation. I couldn't quite see it that way. The problem was unresolved as we adjourned. Later on at home I was mulling over this dilemma while ironing. I heard a voice calling my name (I do not usually hear voices). "Can't you offer yourselves as representatives rather than making a demand?" There was my answer. At the next council several of us met with the General Board and offered ourselves to serve on commissions. Without a dissenting vote it carried. At our council meeting we appointed several women to fill these posts. Another step forward.

Probably the biggest bonus in serving WM was learning to know so many wonderful women—women who promoted Women in Mission as one way in which to serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

How has being part of WM enabled you to be a woman in mission? What are some of your group's accomplishments? What have you learned from them? How has WM encouraged the use of your gifts?

Won't you share your memories? We plan to include excerpts from your letters in upcoming issues. Send them to: Women in Mission, 722 Main Street, Newton, KS 67114.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen is now in her seventh year as Women in Mission Coordinator. Susan and her family live in Newton, Kan.

Our **Women's World Outreach Fund** is supporting **Marcela Carvajal** in her study at Goshen (Ind.) College in the Hispanic Ministries department. She is taking New Testament and church history. Marcela is from the Comunidad de Fe congregation in Chicago and her husband is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Meg Rouse is also being supported as she begins her second course of study in Culpeper, Va., as a part of the Pastoral Studies Distance Education operated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Meg had excellent success in her first course and is enthusiastic about her studies. "I'm ready to roll!" she states.

Let's remember both of these sisters in prayer.

Integration Update. Integration moved forward several steps during joint WM/WMSC executive meetings Oct. 17-19 in Markham, Ill. Our two women's organizations plan to integrate at the national level in 1997. Progress was made concerning many details and the two executives will meet together again in March to complete a proposal. By the grace of God we learn and grow as we continue to negotiate. **Please allow discussion and voting time in your April or May women's group meetings.**

Mennonite World Conference will soon be here! Over the years Women in Mission has been able to support and learn to know several Mennonite women from India.

Leah Sonwani was supported by WM in her studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1981-83. Leah grew up in the General Conference mission area of India and is active in the Janj Mennonite Church in India.

Women in Mission sent money to help with travel expenses for an Indian woman to go to a Mennonite World Conference planning meeting in 1981.

Nalini Singh was funded by WM to study English while her husband Shekhar received theological training in India. Nalini now helps with a nursery in a slum area of Pune, India.

Rachel Bagh is now a seminary teacher in Allahabad, India. Rachel was supported by WM as she studied at Bangalore Theological Seminary 1990-92. Rachel also grew up in the General Conference mission area.

Let us celebrate the sisters we have in Christ in India and around the world. I look forward to representing you in India and sharing with you when I return.

Facts & figures

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

	1995	1996
February-October (in U.S. dollars)	$91,438	$79,672
Canada (in Canadian dollars)	$39,008	$33,320
Percent of GCWM budget reached	50.4%	49.5%

Labels still needed. Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., is still needing the front half of Campbell's soup labels, cut and bundled with a rubber band in groups of 100. Presently the school has enough labels for another van! Unfortunately they do not have the people power to count and bundle the labels.

Labels coming in now will be used for computers. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Campbell's Soup Labels
Hopi Mission School
Box 39
Kykotsmovi AZ 86039

In this season of giving, we in the Women in Mission office want to thank you for your prayers and financial gifts to Women in Mission. We are thankful for the many, many ways in which you contribute to the life of Christ's church. Blessings!

Susan, Bek, Doris

Window shopping

Looking for something new for your group? Maybe you'll find it in these good ideas from women's groups.

- Place an announcement in your local newspaper(s) inviting all women to your meetings.
- Sponsor a church or community craft night for the MCC Relief Sale.
- Have a mug exchange. Invite everyone to bring a mug to give, instructing the giver to have her name on a slip inside. Each one chooses a mug from the table. Whoever she chooses she prays for. Make connections with that woman.
- Begin an annual women's ecumenical prayer breakfast with women in your community.
- Host a meal for international students at Thanksgiving and other holidays.
- In a planning meeting one program committee realized that we are not all mothers, but we are all daughters. So they planned a Daughter Banquet for their church. Thereby all women could feel included. Many themes are possible: thankfulness for women important in our lives; learning from women in the Bible; gifts from our heritage, families, foremothers; family connections; family of God.

World Day of Prayer. Join millions of women around the globe for the 110th World Day of Prayer—an international, ecumenical worship service, on Friday, March 7, 1997. Through the theme, "Like a seed which grows into a tree," this year's Korean writers desire to plant seeds of hope for "An yung"—a Korean equivalent of shalom, or peace. They pray for healing and reunification of their country (Korea has been divided into North and South since 1953); for freedom from invasions suffered over many centuries and, in particular, equality and freedom from oppression and abuse for all Korean women.

LIKE A SEED
WHICH GROWS INTO A TREE

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
March 7, 1997

Additional resource materials and background information on the 1997 World Day of Prayer may be obtained by contacting Church Women United at 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 500, New York, NY 10015, 1-800-298-5551.

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

News

• • ▾

Mission school has first full-time Hopi teacher

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—As the only Native teacher at a Bureau of Indian Affairs primary school in the 1940s, Elizabeth White made quite an impression on Hopi student Jane Polingyouma.

Thanks to White's influence, Polingyouma decided at an early age that she wanted to pursue a career as a teacher.

Today, after a lifetime of employment in education, Polingyouma is working as the first full-time Hopi teacher at Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Her position, which began in August, is being partially funded by an endowment left by the late August and Esther Schmidt. The Schmidts, who volunteered at Hopi Mission School in its early years, specifically designated that their money be used to employ Hopi teachers.

Hopi Mission School, founded in 1951, provides education to students in kindergarten through the sixth grade. It receives financial support and volunteer teachers from the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the American Baptists.

Polingyouma had been a substitute teacher at the school and also served as a volunteer when her two children were students there in the 1980s. Hopi Mission School has always had a good reputation for academic excellence, she says.

"The atmosphere is so different from a large school," says Polingyouma. "Everyone works together. We know that we're here for each other. The fact that it is a Christian school makes a difference."

At first, she didn't realize that her Hopi background would be helpful in her current assignment. But she discovered that her heritage was valuable when other teachers began asking her what kind of cultural activities would be appropriate for the classroom.

During her own childhood, Polingyouma was punished for speaking Hopi at school, even in the first grade, when she did not yet know a word of English.

Her punishment was not as harsh as what previous generations had to experience; she did not receive any physical punishment for speaking her native language, she says. Instead, she had to perform extra chores or was told she could not attend free school activities such as movies.

While Polingyouma says she "did not feel terribly bad" about her punishment, she did become "more cautious. I learned that I needed to speak English in order to do other things."

> *"I always wanted to work with my own people. I'm one of them. I know their needs."*
>
> **Jane Polingyouma**

She went on to study at Haskell Indian High School (now a university) in Lawrence, Kan., and received a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, in 1960.

At her first job after university, she taught at a primary school on the Navajo reservation. There, she let her first-grade students speak Navajo even though it was against the school policy. Polingyouma would hold up pictures and the children would say what they were in Navajo and she would say what they were in English.

After about four months at the school, the principal called Polingyouma into her office and asked her what she was doing with her class. She replied, I am not sure what you are talking about. The principal informed her that her class was learning English faster than all the other classes.

Polingyouma then told the principal that she had broken the school rule about only using English in the classroom. After that encounter, the principal decided that all the classes could

Inside the news

Cold War reminders warmed by new friendships / p. 15

MCC visit to Zaire reveals great need / p. 16

"MK" returns to reconnect with his past / p. 18

Atlanta unit closes after 35 years of service / p. 19

Mennonite Mutual Aid and mental health professionals came together Oct. 12-14 in Syracuse, Ind., for the first time ever to jointly review MMA's mental health underwriting guidelines. The result was an initial draft on improved, more detailed underwriting guidelines for mental health conditions.

• • •

"Several Voices, Single Vision," a retreat for singles sponsored by the Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, will be held Jan. 24-26, 1997, at Cross Wind Conference Center, Hesston, Kan. For more information, contact Western District at P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; (316) 283-6300; e-mail wdc2@juno.com.

• • •

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., invites researchers to apply for the third annual Harry A. Brunk Scholars Award. The $2,000 U.S. scholarship goes to a person who intends to complete research using the Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives at EMU. Application deadline is Feb. 1, 1997. For more information and application forms, contact the library at (540) 342-4169, e-mail lehmanjo@ emu.edu.

use Navajo.

Over the course of her career, Polingyouma has taught at a school for the deaf and blind and provided tutoring to high school dropouts. But she particularly likes to teach Hopi students.

"I always wanted to work with my own people. I'm one of them. I know their needs," she says. Before taking her current job, she taught at Bureau of Indian Affairs schools on the Hopi reservation for more than 20 years.
Carla Reimer

Editor's note: *Hopi Mission School hopes to hire more Christian Hopi teachers in the future. Information about the school and a list of giving projects, including collection of soup labels, is available by writing the school at P.O. Box 39, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039.*

Standing in the gap

Wendy Janzen

Canadian Mennonite Bible College worship team members, from left, Eryn Smit, Matt Schaaf, Jeremy Wiebe and Myron Martens, lead singing during the third biennial CMBC youth ministry conference, held Nov. 1-3 on the CMBC campus in Winnipeg. The youth ministers, youth group sponsors and CMBC students who gathered for the conference responded enthusiastically to the team's leadership. "They really demonstrated how *Hymnal: A Worship Book* can be a very effective praise resource," said one.

Special resource person for the weekend was Mark DeVries of Nashville, Tenn., associate minister for youth and families at First Presbyterian Church there. He described the current crisis of youth ministry as being "the isolation of young Christians from the larger church family." He pointed to the "orphaning" of youth from adults in congregations and challenged adults to serve as spiritual models to young people. He also noted the necessity for those who minister to youth to "stand in the gap" (from Ezekiel 22:30) between the worlds of youth and adults.

In keeping with the emphasis on family, conference participants were divided into "family groups," discussion groups that remained together for the duration of the weekend. "We all really learned from one another," said Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church youth pastor Randy Hildebrand. "It was a great opportunity for CMBC students to learn what's really happening in the congregations from youth pastors and sponsors, and for youth pastors to experience some of the good things [such as the worship team] happening at the hands of CMBC students."

Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Mutual Aid will sponsor the Mennonite Health Assembly April 3-6, 1997, in Pittsburgh. The theme is "Christian Vision for Caring Communities." For information call Gail Kersting at 1-800-348-7468.

• • •

Church World Service turned 50 in 1996. CWS is a ministry of the National Council of Churches that works in the United States and around the world to meet emergency needs, support sustainable self-help development and address the root causes of poverty and powerlessness. (*Messenger*)

• • •

Massive cuts in federal transfers to Canada's provinces are creating a two-tiered health-care system, one for the affluent and one for the poor, says the Catholic Health Association of Canada in a statement released Oct. 15. Public discussion about reforms are urgently needed from a social justice perspective, says the association. About 97 percent of single mothers under 25 live in poverty, child poverty is 55 percent higher than in 1989 and the number of food banks has increased 187 percent since 1989, according to the association. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Dr. Delbert Gratz of Bluffton, Ohio, former librarian and professor of history at Bluffton College, was awarded the Service First Class of the Federated Republic of Germany, presented by the president of Rhineland-Palatinate at an Oct. 4 ceremony in Landau, Germany. Gratz and Thelma, his wife, distributed Mennonite aid in the American and French occupied zones of Germany during World War II. Since that time, he has continued to work in aid projects for Germany and to try to further interest in German speech, especially the Palatinate (Pennsylvania-German) and Bernese dialects of the Mennonites, and has led many tours in Germany. (*The Ada [Ohio] Herald*)

Cold War reminders warmed by new friendships

Salunga, Pa. (EMM)—They didn't understand the language, but Norman and Jean Shenk felt almost as if they were worshiping in their home church near Manheim, Pa., instead of a village in Moldova, when they recognized the familiar tune "Praise God from Whom," what most Mennonites simply call "606."

Memories of home: *A member of the Old Believers Orthodox Church in Moldova shows a quilted nine-patch prayer cushion.*

Norman has spent the past 42 years working with finance and relief for Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga. He and Jean traveled to eastern Europe in late August, making connections and visiting EMM missionaries throughout the region.

As the Shenks traveled through Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Hungary and Albania, they encountered many reminders of the Cold War era.

"The underground transit system in Moscow is 24 meters below ground. It was placed that deep so Americans could never bomb it," says Norman.

"One [Albanian] father [on the train] told his son that we were Americans. So the little boy pulled out his toy gun and went 'Bang, bang, bang,'" says Jean. "They were brainwashed about us, just like we were about them."

In Ukraine, "we saw many acres of former collective farms with machinery standing out in the open, rusting away," says Norman. "We saw tractors with large eight-bottom plows and large combines not easily adaptable to small vegetable gardens."

Since the fall of communism, the land has been distributed to families, but in small plots where it is impossible to use the large equipment.

"To form cooperatives would sound too much like the old communal style," Norman says.

Despite these leftovers from another political climate, the Shenks connected with people wherever they went.

Language often created barriers, but not enough to make communication impossible. "When they made signs, we wondered. And when we made signs, they wondered. So we communicated through signs and wonders," Norman says.

They were welcomed into Kamenka, a village in the Ukraine, by women with gifts of flowers and a table spread with food. A local television crew filmed the event. At a village church in Moldova, they witnessed the baptisms of 13 adults, ages 18 to 60, and heard "Praise God from Whom."

"[The Moldovan church] had no idea it was a Mennonite anthem," says Norman. "They simply were singing it as one of their song selections for that day."

Before leaving the United States, Norman had read a report from former Mennonite Central Committee worker Walter Bergen about a village in the Ukraine where scattered Mennonites struggled to make a living.

"In the Ukraine, their seeds are worn out. They need some fresh, hybrid seed," Bergen's report had said.

The Shenks and another couple who traveled with them part of the time packed in their luggage 4,000 packets of vegetable and flower seeds donated by Seedway Inc. in Elizabethtown, Pa.

In Chisinau, the capital of Moldova, the Shenks joined six other North Americans and a group of Moldovans to help unload a 40-foot land/sea container filled with food, clothing and medical supplies for Bethel Baptist Church.

Some packages were given in exchange for services rendered to the church. "The pastor has employed more than 200 jobless members over a period of two months to help repair their church," Jean says, "and was giving them some food and aid for payment."

"It felt good to have this kind of hands-on experience," says Norman, who spends most of his time on the other end of the humanitarian aid process. *Carol L. Wert*

Four Mennonite-related mutual insurance companies in Pennsylvania merged Oct. 1. They are Franconia Mennonite Aid Plan of Harleysville, Mennonite Mutual Insurance Association of Intercourse, Tri-County Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. of Gap and Goodville Mutual Casualty Co. of New Holland. The new entity will use the Goodville Mutual name and be based at the New Holland headquarters.

• • •

The social health of the United States in 1994 was the lowest it has been in 25 years, according to the Institute of Innovation in Social Policy at Fordham University. The Index of Social Health, which gauges the nation's performance in addressing key social problems, released its latest report on Oct. 14, which shows that on a scale of 100, U.S. social health in 1994 was at 37.5. The gap between rich and poor has worsened faster in the 1990s than has any other problem, says the institute. The institute began compiling the index in 1970, when the figure stood at 74. It peaked in 1973 at 77.5 and since then has dropped steadily. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Mark and Mary Thiessen Nation of Los Angeles left for London in November to work under the auspices of Mennonite Board of Missions at the London Mennonite Centre. Mark will serve as program director, coordinating the teaching program. Mary, a 23-year veteran of urban ministry, will build relationships between Anabaptist-related congregations and church leaders and serve on the Bridge Builders mediation project, a voluntary organization that seeks to resolve community and neighborhood disputes. The Thiessen Nations personify the growing ties between urban and first-generation Anabaptists around the world. "There is cross-fertilization between Anabaptists in Europe and those interested in North American urban Anabaptist ministry," says Nelson Kraybill, outgoing director of the London Mennonite Centre. (*Tom Price*)

Canada is the seventh largest military exporter in the world, selling military supplies to about 65 nations each year, and the Pentagon is its best customer, Ken Epps told a group of about 150 gathered in Ottawa Nov. 2. Epps, of Project Ploughshares, a national ecumenical disarmament group, was participating in a symposium organized by the Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade. He also told his audience that the percentage of Canadian military exports to the Third World is increasing. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

The FBI reports that there were nearly 8,000 hate crimes committed in the United States in 1995. Preliminary data came from 9,500 local and state law enforcement agencies covering 75 percent of the population. Race was the motivation in 60.8 percent of the crimes. Of race-related hate crimes, 61.9 percent were aimed at blacks and 25.4 percent at whites. Religious bias was the second most frequent motivation, with Jews targeted most heavily at 82.9 percent. Sexual orientation motivated 12.8 percent of total hate crimes. Most of these attacks were against gay men. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

The archdiocese of San Salvador, El Salvador, has moved slain archbishop Oscar Romero one step closer to possible canonization by completing its review of his life. The archdiocesan review, begun in 1993, involved careful study of Romero's homilies, writings and personal letters as well as testimony from different people who knew the works of Romero during his tenure as San Salvador's archbishop. All materials will now be sent to Rome. Romero was assassinated while celebrating Mass in San Salvador in March 1980. The canonization process, begun six years ago, has been publicly endorsed by Pope John Paul II. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

MCC visit to Zaire reveals great need

Akron, Pa.—Two Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers were among the first group of outsiders allowed into Bukavu, Zaire, on Nov. 20, since the town was captured by Zairian rebels at the end of October.

After a one-day assessment visit, Terry Sawatsky, co-director of MCC's Africa programs, and Krista Rigalo, an MCC Zaire worker, reiterate the need for prayer and aid for Rwandans and Zairians around Bukavu.

The visit was the first contact MCC had with its partners in Bukavu since MCCers Rigalo and Fidele Lumeya evacuated the town on Oct. 27.

Sawatsky and Rigalo found the MCC office in Bukavu looted and two MCC vehicles, a computer and other items stolen. The loss is estimated at $30,000 U.S./$40,000 Cdn. Neighbors also reported finding two bodies in the yard of the MCC house.

Although most Rwandan refugees around Goma, Zaire, have returned home, the situation further south in Bukavu is quite different.

The four Rwandan refugee camps MCC helped support near Bukavu are now empty. Contacts in Bukavu said the Interahamwe (Rwandan Hutus involved in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda) had taken the refugees hostage and were forcing them west, further into Zaire's interior.

Sawatsky reports that roads were not passable by vehicle, and people were traveling on foot. The sick and some children were being left to die by the road. Some reports indicated as many as 250,000 people may have been in this group.

Zairian homes and farms along the refugees' route have been looted. Although Bukavu appeared calm, many of its 300,000 Zairian residents appeared to be hiding in forests and villages outside town.

Rigalo found Dieu Donne and Yvette Kalamuna and their family, recently commissioned by the Zairian Mennonite Brethren Church to plant a new congregation in Bukavu, safe in their home.

However, during the rebel takeover, an unknown number of people were killed, including Yvette's brother Muta, who had recently become a Christian and was to be the first baptized member of the newly planted Bukavu Mennonite Church.

Contacts said that Interahamwe and Zairian youth tortured Muta for three days, apparently because they thought his features indicated he was a Tutsi, before shooting him. The whereabouts and fate of many other MCC partners and friends were unknown.

Sawatsky reports that countless Zairians around Bukavu have been uprooted and have lost their possessions. Zairian soldiers, many of whom serve unpaid, "took what they could and ran," he says.

He fears aid agencies will focus on assisting only Rwandans and overlook the suffering of Zairians.

"The situation will continue to be fluid and difficult to predict," Sawatsky says. "MCC will have to respond to changing dynamics." *MCC Information Services*

Dave Klassen

Alive or dead: *This 1994 photo was taken minutes after a Rwandan woman was reunited with her son in an orphanage in Bukavu, Zaire. They had become separated during a desperate flight from Rwanda's civil war and for about four months neither had any idea what had happened to the other. War has once again forced people from their homes and split apart families in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, where people from Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire have been fleeing factional fighting in those countries.*

Regular, decaf or NRSV?

Carol Thiessen

Steinbach, Man.—Every week, while adults and children at the Steinbach Evangelical Mennonite Church troop off to tiny classrooms for Sunday school, another group meets in a more unlikely setting—a local restaurant.

While the Mall Restaurant, just a few blocks from the large Main Street church, is closed on Sundays to paying customers, it opens its doors wide to this group.

They make their own coffee, rearrange tables into a large square and participate in lively discussions.

"They feel much more comfortable there than in a traditional church setting," says associate pastor Mel Koop.

Koop started the class about six years ago—he thought holding a Sunday school class outside the church would make an easier entry point for people embarking on their spiritual journey. With Mary, his wife, Koop invited some people to meet in their home for Sunday school.

The idea was instantly popular, and the class grew quickly, but Koop says he felt that for some people, a pastor's home wasn't "unbiased territory."

So he approached Agnes Kroeker, a church member who owned a restaurant in the local mall, and she gladly opened its doors to the class. Koop was a little worried when Kroeker sold the restaurant, but when he went to the new owner, he was given a key and invited to keep using the restaurant free of charge.

Now about 20 to 30 people attend the class each week. Koop says the mix includes single parents, divorced people and some who have never attended church.

Frank Plett joined the class after becoming a Christian last spring. He says he would feel comfortable in a church setting but enjoys the relaxed atomosphere of the mall class. He is now preparing for baptism.

A number of class participants have gone on to become more involved in church activities.

Arlene and Al Riediger were two of the first people to start attending the mall restaurant class. As fringe church attenders, they say they sensed a need to make changes in their lives when Koop invited them to the new Sunday school class.

"It was not in the church and it was kind of safe," Arlene says. "And we thought it would be a good place to start. I think it was definitely a turning point in our lives."

The Riedigers attended the class for about two years and then decided to begin teaching Sunday school themselves. Now they serve at the church as a deacon couple and on several committees. *Carol Thiessen for* Mennonite Reporter

The United Nations has named Canada the best place in the world to live for the fourth time this decade. The U.N.'s 1996 human development index, which measures income, education and life expectancy, ranked Canada first among 174 countries. Canada scored 95.2 percent, ahead of the United States at 94 percent and Japan and the Netherlands at 93.8 percent. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Rev. Godfrey Broster, a Church of England rector, has started a small brewery to raise money for the three congregations he serves in Sussex, England. The brewery produces three kinds of beer—Rector's Pleasure, Rector's Revenge and Parson's Porter. In addition to covering maintenance expenses for the three churches, some of the proceeds will help pay for restoration of medieval frescoes that were whitewashed during the Reformation in one of the churches. Broster, in his mid-40s, worked in a brewery about 20 years before becoming ordained. (*Presbyterian Record*)

• • •

The Angus Reid Group of Toronto conducted a major poll in the United States (population 300 million) and Canada (population 30 million) on attitudes toward religion and politics in both countries. In findings released Oct. 21, the poll found that: 79 percent of Americans consider religion an important part of life compared with 58 percent of Canadians; 71 percent of Americans pray weekly compared with 47 percent of Canadians; 40 percent of Americans attend church weekly compared with 21 percent of Canadians; 43 percent of Americans read their Bibles weekly compared with 21 percent of Canadians. In addition, 41 percent of Americans say religion is important to their political thinking compared with 19 percent of Canadians; 25 percent of Americans identify themselves as evangelicals compared with 11 percent of Canadians, and 85 percent of both groups believe that churches should spend more to help the poor. (*Christian Week*)

Ruth Hofman was ordained as pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Toronto on Aug. 24, the first woman in North America in her denomination to be ordained as "minister of the Word and sacraments" following a policy change last summer. (*Faith Today*)

• • •

***The* (Toronto) *Globe and Mail* reports that a new credit card introduced in mid-September by the Arab-Malaysian Bank rejects all attempted transactions considered "ungodly," including casino, liquor, massage and nightclub payments. The card may be used for donations to charity, which are required by Islam; previously religious authorities did not consider donations by credit card acceptable. The card also includes discounts on travel to Mecca. (*Faith Today*)**

• • •

Two Mennonite churches in Brazil have contributed to an international missions effort for the first time ever. The Samambaia and Ceilandia Mennonite churches raised $622 U.S. during August and September through offerings, a used clothing sale and other special events for a church planting project among Rwandan refugees and local residents of eastern Zaire. The three Mennonite conferences in Zaire initiated the outreach in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services. The two Brazilian congregations heard about it through Commission on Overseas Mission workers Steve and Janet Plenert in Brasilia. One church member noted that this was an opportunity to help another church in the same way the Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona, Man., has helped with their construction projects. The Bergthaler church supports the Plenerts through COM's Mission Partners Program.

"MK" returns to reconnect with his past

Syracuse, Ind.—From 1967 to 1992, Michael and Mattie Marie Mast served among the Toba Indians in northern Argentina and raised four children, before returning to the United States for retirement.

Now, after finishing college, their son Marcello has gone back to the region to come to terms with his childhood as a "missionary kid."

"Ever since I left five years ago, I've wanted to go back sometime," Mast says. He is serving a two-year Mennonite Board of Missions assignment in Asuncion, Paraguay, teaching at Asuncion Christian Academy, from which he graduated in 1991.

Christy Risser

Marcello Mast

Asuncion is near the Argentina-Paraguay border, only a few hours from where Mast grew up, so he plans to visit the people among whom his parents worked for 25 years.

More than that, however, Mast hopes this assignment will give him the opportunity to integrate his growing-up years into his own vision of adulthood.

"I feel like I need to close that chapter of my life before I can figure out where I want to go," he says.

Mast acknowledges that sometimes when North American children grow up in a mission context, they end up rejecting their parents' chosen vocation—perhaps because of lack of choice that children of mission workers have in their living situation, added to culture shock when they come to the United States for higher education or when their parents retire.

"I've never wanted to reject Argentina," he says. "My older brother went back [to Argentina] twice, but it's in the past for him. His home is in North America. For me, ... I have to discover for myself where my home really is.

"The mission board, the churches and even your family just expect that you will automatically return to North America instead of staying in the country where you've grown up."

For now, Mast plans to take it all one day at a time as he discovers what and where his future will be. "It's hard to know what to expect," he says. "It's been so long since I've been there, but I believe this time will help me figure out where to go from here." *Christy Risser*

Breaking the bank for mission

Once a year, the children of Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church are encouraged to be destructive. On Fall Missions Sunday (Nov. 17 this year), they smash ceramic jug banks in which they have collected coins over the past year. Here, from left, Michelle, Shane and Sara Esmonde break their jugs on the count of three.

This year, the children of Lima Mennonite filled about 65 jugs and raised nearly $600 to help support Ann Garber Kampaore, who serves with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Burkina Faso. Adults also contributed toward the overall goal of $5,000 for Kampaore's support.

The jug-smashing continues a 31-year tradition begun at First Mennonite Church of Lima before it merged with Northside Mennonite to form Lima Mennonite.

Atlanta unit closes after 35 years of service

Atlanta (MCC)—The most precious piece of furniture in Atlanta's "Mennonite House" was a large round table. At a celebration of 35 years of Mennonite Central Committee U. S. service in Atlanta, held here Sept. 20-22, former volunteers and supporters of the Atlanta unit gathered around the "table" of shared memories.

The real table, which could seat 24, symbolized the community spirit and desire for interracial dialogue that motivated Mennonite volunteers and their co-workers throughout the unit's history.

Becky Hofkamp

A resting place: *Many who spent time under the roof of the "Mennonite House" in Atlanta were involved in the civil rights movement in the South.*

Vincent and Rosemarie Harding, the first leaders of MCC's Atlanta service program, spoke at the September gathering on "Treasure Old and Treasure New: Justice in the Household of Faith," from Matthew 13:52.

These words call for remembering the past in order to renew a vision for racial justice in the United States, said Vincent Harding. "The experience of the 1960s is an important story," he said. "What this has meant for the Mennonite church is not fully appreciated."

In 1958, five men from Woodlawn Mennonite Church in Chicago (Harding, Elmer Neufeld, Glen Boese, Delton Franz and Ed Reddick), went South to look for ways Mennonites could be involved in the struggle for civil rights led by African-Americans.

In 1961, MCC's Peace Section and Voluntary Service office sent the Hardings to Atlanta to "represent an Anabaptist peace witness" there. They first moved into 540 Houston Street, around the corner from the home of Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

Residents of the "Mennonite House," as it became known, sought to witness to the local community about the possibilities of Christian-based justice and racial reconciliation, symbolized by interracial living.

The house became a base from which the Hardings traveled to participate in freedom movement activities across the South. It was also a resting place for people who had been wounded, physically and emotionally, in the civil rights struggle and was the center for a network of volunteers working in the South in the freedom struggle.

Chris Yoder, son of early MCC workers Delmar and Marjorie, shared memories of his childhood in the Mennonite House. He said there always seemed to be a police car outside.

Wally Unger, who served in 1965, reflected on the "power of the house"—a person was automatically accepted in the community if people knew he or she lived there.

The weekend's events also marked MCC's decision to close the Atlanta unit in order to open a new one in Philadelphia.

Harding reminded his listeners that "God calls us to the challenge and struggle for justice, reconciliation and new vision. The body must change or it cannot be healthy."

He identified three principles that should guide MCC's future work in the U.S. service program. We must, he said, try to figure out how to meet each other across racial lines in this country. We must seek God's way—not politicians'—of caring for the poor and create new alternatives for the needy and the marginalized. We must protect and nurture our children.

Rosemarie Harding echoed this concern for children. "There are issues greater than racism," she said.

Our society does not love children, she said, and our government is abandoning them. A new MCC team must be created to save our society and save our children, she insisted. Only MCC volunteers and people like them are going to do it because "we are the crazy ones who are ready to serve."
Deborah Fast

Zion Mennonite Church, Goodland, Ind., will close its doors at the end of December. Dale Schertz has pastored there nearly 52 years.

• • •

Elkhart (Ind.) Housing Partnership has bought the 500 South Main building in Elkhart, home to the Mennonite Boards of Congregational Ministries, Mission and Education of the Mennonite Church. EHP, a private, nonprofit organization, assumed management of the building Oct. 1. The partnership plans to rent apartments in the building to low-income adults over age 55. The three MC boards have signed renewable three-year leases with opt-out clauses. None expected the sale to require a move from the facility. (*Tom Price*)

• • •

Larry Kehler, secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission, visited Macau and Thailand during an administrative trip to Asia Oct. 2-Nov. 4. COM, with other groups, has been supporting its first mission workers in the two countries since this past summer. Located near Hong Kong, Macau is known for its gambling casinos. The Portuguese territory consists of two islands and a peninsula and has a population of 500,000 squeezed into six square miles, making it the most crowded place in the world. The country will revert to Chinese rule in 1999. There are only about 50 Protestant churches in Macau, with a total membership of about 4,000. Mennonite mission workers George and Tobia Veith of Canada, who previously served with COM in Hong Kong, and Indonesian Shirley Liem are now in Macau. They plan to use a cell group model to reach out to the working-class Chinese who have few opportunities for emigration. Canadians Rad and Pat Houmphan joined Eastern Mennonite Missions workers in Thailand in August. Former Laotian refugees, the Houmphans hope they are alert to cultural nuances. At a worship service Kehler attended at a village church, sticky rice was served instead of bread for the Communion.

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MBM—Mennonite Board of Missions
VS—Voluntary Service

Many Mennonite students receive some financial aid from their congregations for college or seminary expenses. Bethel Mennonite Church in West Liberty, Ohio, has decided, in addition, that students and graduates who want to serve the church through voluntary service should not have to forgo this because of school debts. Bethel Church has revised its student aid policy to include repayment of a portion of student loans while the young adult serves in voluntary service with a Mennonite mission board or agency. (*Christy Risser*)

• • •

Bill Thiessen, director of programs for Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia, attended the First Nations Conference on Traditions of Nonviolence at the Sqamish Nation Recreation Centre in Vancouver in October. The conference was the first of its kind. Thiessen and Menno Wiebe of MCC Canada were there at the invitation of Ovide Mercredi, First Nations Grand Chief. Seminar themes and topics included "Nonviolence as a Traditional Way of Life of the First Nations" and "Healing Domestic Violence—Seeking Alternatives." (*Angelika Dawson*)

• • •

A member of the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia was killed Nov. 23 in the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines jetliner that had been hijacked. Beyene Gutema, a member of the MKC executive council, served on the Mennonite World Conference General Council and had been scheduled to lead Africa Day evening worship on Jan. 10, 1997, during MWC Assembly Gathered in Calcutta, India. He was employed by World Vision in Ethiopia and is survived by his wife and three children. The flight had left Addis Ababa for Nairobi, Kenya, and Abidjan, Ivory Coast, when it was hijacked and eventually crashed into the Indian Ocean off the Comoro Islands. Death toll was 123 with 52 survivors.

DEATHS

Leona Schrag Daza died Nov. 8 in Colombia. She was a COM worker in Colombia 1968-1970.

Waldo Kaufman, North Newton, Kan., died Nov. 27 at age 77. He was a pastor for 45 years and served at Bethel Church, Hydro, Okla.; Zion Church, Elbing, Kan.; Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb.; Mennonite Church of Lehigh (Kan.) and Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan. He also served as assistant to the president at Freeman (S.D.) Junior College. Kaufman was a member of Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

MINISTERS

Marjorie Ediger will retire from pastoring First Church, Ransom, Kan., in May 1997.

Norma Johnson will be associate pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., beginning March 1, 1997.

Ray and Brenda Martin Hurst have resigned as co-pastors at Tabor Church, rural Newton, Kan., effective July 31, 1997.

Keith Meyers was licensed as pastor at Zion Fellowship, Elmira, Ont., Dec. 15.

Bev Suderman-Gladwell resigned as pastor at Erie View United Mennonite Church, Port Rowan, Ont.

WORKERS

Corbin Graber will be program director at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich., beginning Jan. 1, 1997.

Alice and **Dennis Huxman**, Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., have begun a two-year VS term as community and church service workers in Tucson, Ariz., with MBM, Elkhart, Ind.

Frank and **Mary Anne Zacharias**, Aylmer, Ont., are serving with COM in Mexico until the end of May 1997. They are teaching at Steinreich Bible School.

A. Huxman

D. Huxman

The Other Side, the Christian magazine of peace, justice and spirituality, is seeking a full-time **editor**. Solid editorial and writing experience, good organization, grounding in justice issues and strong biblical background are essential. We offer excellent benefits and work on a common salary structure—currently $17,745 per year for individuals (generous stipend for dependent children).

Contact **Search Committee, 300 W. Apsley, Philadelphia, PA 19144; (215) 849-2178;** e-mail: **TOS.PA@ ecunet.org**.

MVS
SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Hospice Care Worker
Hamilton, ON

Asst Coord/Senior Srvs
Kansas City, KS

Family Advocate
Austin, TX

ESL Teacher
Boulder, CO

Respite Care
Berne, IN

Mennonite Voluntary Service
PO Box 347 Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

Goshen College seeks applicants for a tenure-track position in **chemistry** beginning in August 1997. A Ph.D. in chemistry and teaching excellence are required. Duties may include general chemistry, physical chemistry, inorganic chemistry, chemistry for allied health majors and the initiation of an undergraduate research program. The department has modern labs in an excellent facility. Rank will be commensurate with experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Applications from women and minorities are strongly encouraged.

Send letter of application, resume, a brief list of research interests, a philosophy of teaching, unofficial transcripts and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503**; fax: **(219) 535-7660**; e-mail: **johndn@goshen.edu**; web site: **http://www.goshen.edu**. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 1 or until the position is filled.

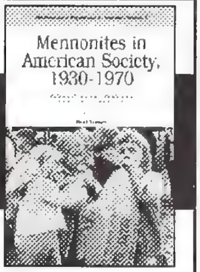
Bluffton College announces a full-time **chief librarian** position beginning August 1997. Responsibilities include leadership and coordination of planning, budgeting, managing the collections and staffing the Musselman Library, including the Mennonite Historical Library and the college archives, as well as other collections on campus. The position involves directing ongoing efforts to advance and integrate the use of technology, representing library matters to administration, serving as liaison with library publics and interacting effectively with faculty and others in promoting the mission of the library. Graduate degree from an ALA-accredited program required; Ph.D. preferred. Administrative and supervisory experience in an academic setting expected. Position has all the rights and privileges of other faculty members except tenure.

Consideration of applications begins March 1, 1997, and continues until an appointment is made. Additional information is available at **http://www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac**.

Submit letter of application, resume or vita, three letters of reference and unofficial transcripts to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the V.P. and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 West College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. EOE.

MENNONITE EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA SERIES

MENNONITES IN AMERICAN SOCIETY, 1930-1970
Modernity and the Persistence of Religious Community



This fourth and final volume provides a rich interpretive story of how Mennonites have preserved their identity through the 20th century. **Paul Toews** provides an in-depth look at how Mennonites and Amish were able to become a more visible and respected people than ever before during their more than 300 years in America. Paper, 448 pages.

Other books in the MEA Series:

Land, Piety, Peoplehood by Richard K. MacMaster
Peace, Faith, Nation by Theron F. Schlabach
Vision, Doctrine, War by James C. Juhnke

Each, $19.95;
in Canada $28.50.
Set, $79.80;
in Canada $113.95.

TO ORDER CALL:
1 800 759-4447.
hp%mph@mcimail.com

HERALD PRESS

Mennonite Foundation is seeking a **representative** for its Harrisonburg, Va., office. The foundation is a Mennonite Church-related organization providing stewardship education and planned giving support to an established donor constituency and charitable institutions. The ideal candidate will have familiarity with and support Mennonite beliefs. Experience in fund-raising, planned giving, banking, investments, law, accounting or sales will be helpful background for this position. Strong presentation and communication skills are essential. Limited travel required.

Send or fax letter of interest with resume to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; 1-800-348-7468**.

Assistant director of media and marketing services: Goshen College Media and Marketing Services seeks a person with skills in public relations, marketing, writing and production management. Responsibilities include production management and providing public relations, marketing, editorial and writing support for academic and/or administrative departments on campus for news releases and publication projects. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resume and three references to **John D. Yoder, Director of Media and Marketing Services, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7568;** fax: **(219) 535-7660;** e-mail: **jdyoder@goshen.edu**. Web site: **www.goshen.edu**. Application deadline is **Jan. 10, 1997**, or until the position is filled.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT & PEACEMAKING

MASTER OF ARTS
AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

UPCOMING TRAINING EVENT

Basic Institute in Conflict Management & Mediation

- January 27–31, 1997 (Monday–Friday)
- 30-hour training
- Integrates biblical teachings and social sciences
- University and seminary credit available

"Since the Institute, I've used cooperative resolution many, many times.... It really works!"
— Jack Shantz, Hospital Administrator

CONCENTRATIONS

- **Church Conflict Management & Peacemaking**
- **Mediation**
- **Restorative Justice**
- **School Conflict Management & Peacemaking**
- **Individualized Studies**

Fresno Pacific University
Fundamentum Christus

CENTER FOR PEACEMAKING & CONFLICT STUDIES
1717 South Chestnut Avenue • Fresno, California 93702
pacs@fresno.edu • http://www.fresno.edu/pacs
(800) 909-8677 • (209) 455-5840

Reviews

FILMS

MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR

The English Patient, *written and directed by Anthony Minghella, produced by Saul Zaentz; rated R*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

Based on Canadian Michael Ondaatje's poetic, Booker Prize-winning novel, this lavish film explores love, war and identity.

The story moves between World War II Italy and pre-war North Africa. While the film is simpler and presented more chronologically than the book, some viewers may have difficulty at first following the plot. It may take some time to settle into the tale, but soon it grabs your intellect and emotions and won't let go.

A French Canadian nurse, Hana (Juliet Binoche), moves her "English patient" (Ralph Fiennes)—hideously burned when his plane was shot down in the Sahara by Germans—into an abandoned Italian monastery toward the end of the war. Though compassionate, Hana carries her own emotional wounds, fearing that everyone she loves will die.

Her patient, who claims to suffer amnesia, is not English but the Hungarian Count Almasy. Through flashbacks he reveals his life as an explorer charting the North African desert before the war. One day the aristocratic Geoffrey Clinton (Colin Firth) shows up with his adventurous wife, Katherine (Kristin Scott Thomas). The taciturn Almasy falls in love with her, and their adulterous affair leads to tragedy.

A Canadian thief named Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe) comes to the monastery and questions the patient. A Sikh demolitions expert, Kip (Naveen Andrews), also arrives and spends his days defusing mines the Germans left behind. The film ignores his backstory, a significant part of the book. Kip and Hana fall in love, but their relationship seems abrupt, with little development.

Newsweek

Much of the film depicts the affair between Almasy and Katherine. It uses that relationship to portray the destructiveness of nationalism. Katherine writes to her lover, "We are the real countries, not the boundaries drawn on maps by powerful men."

The film omits the climax of the book and waters down the religious sensibility of the novel. But movie and book are different works, each worth experiencing. Each will pull you into its world and leave you changed.

The film is beautifully shot by John Seale, and the acting throughout is superb. Made for adults, it is that rare work that succeeds on a private and a public plane.

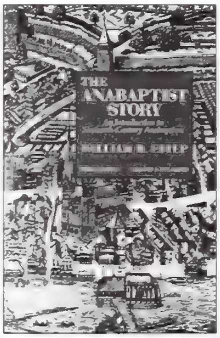
BOOKS

ANABAPTISM REVISITED

The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism (Third Edition) *by William R. Estep (Eerdmans, 1996, 332 pages, $20 U.S.)*

Reviewed by Dale R. Schrag, Newton, Kan.

William Estep is distinguished professor emeritus of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and a historian with a passion for 16th-century Anabaptists. This is a third, "revised and enlarged" edition of a work that first appeared in 1963.



Readers of *The Mennonite* may well wonder if the world needs another introduction to 16th-century Anabaptism. C.J. Dyck's *Introduction to Mennonite History* and J. Denny Weaver's *Becoming Anabaptist* are, after all, still in print. What could Estep possibly offer that isn't already covered in Dyck and Weaver?

ALASKA, YUKON & the INSIDE PASSAGE

July 9-19, 1997

Enjoy majestic beauty, shimmering glaciers, deep fjords, soaring eagles, thundering caribou, 1,000-mile cruise and much more with Mennonite friends from all over North America.

Call **1-800-565-0451 TODAY** for a brochure.

Ask about our other tours: Jamaica, Paraguay, China, Scandinavia & Europe.

TOURMAGINATION

22 King St. S., Suite 401
Waterloo, ON N2J 1N8

Reg.#1567624

1011 Cathill Road
Sellersville, PA 18960

First, *The Anabaptist Story* is written from a decidedly Baptist (as opposed to Mennonite) point of view. Not surprisingly, Estep's favorite Anabaptist is Balthasar Hubmaier; the book's final chapter contains an extended discussion of the historical connections between Anabaptists and Baptists.

Second, while the early chapters are largely descriptive and contain little new information, later ones offer detailed, useful and unique analysis. Estep's chapters on "Baptism and Discipleship" and "Church and State" alone may be worth the price of the volume. These are chapters worth reading and rereading.

Finally, in striking contrast to Weaver's *Becoming Anabaptist*, Estep's book reflects an earlier interpretation of Anabaptism. Estep acknowledges the existence of 25 years of revisionist scholarship on 16th-century Anabaptism, but it is obvious that he is suspicious of much of that scholarship. *The Anabaptist Story* retains more than a bit of a 1963 historiographical "feel."

Whether one views these differences as affirmations or critiques of Estep's work will, no doubt, vary from reader to reader. The point to be made is simply that the work is unique in its approach and interpretation. It was a book worth publishing; it is a book worth purchasing and reading.

The most compelling reason to buy and read this book may well be Estep's palpable passion for the 16th-century Anabaptists. If half the Mennonites in the world shared Estep's enthusiasm for their forebears, the Mennonite church would look different from how it does today. And it would almost certainly be growing.

ANABAPTIST SPIRITUALITY

Spiritual Life in Anabaptism: Classic Devotional Resources *by Cornelius J. Dyck (Herald Press, 1996, 310 pages, $16.95 U.S./$24.95 Cdn.)*

Reviewed by Karla C. Morton, Harleysville, Pa.

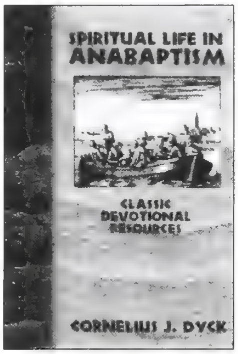
C.J. Dyck has collected here a number of early Anabaptist writings on the spiritual life—more like snippets of writings, sometimes long and other times shorter.

I initially expected more contemplative readings. But Dyck reminds us that for the early Anabaptists, a contemplative life was nearly impossible, given the way they were forced to live.

Were the Anabaptists contemplatives? A few were, if by that we mean they meditated and reflected on biblical texts and meanings, spiritual truths and especially personal experience. The depth of Anabaptists' lives is seen particularly in their letters from prison.

But Anabaptists were definitely not contemplatives if we define that as spending days, months and years of near solitary confinement with an ascetic agenda or mindset. What I found, instead, was a depth of biblical teaching and knowledge that can reach out to us today in new and profound ways.

Dyck divides the writings into 12 subject groups, including the Apostles' Creed, discipleship, peace and justice, lifestyle and spiritual discernment. In the first chapter, he gives a brief but thorough history of the church and the various reform movements that led to the Radical Reformation from which Mennonites are descended, and provides a wonderful overview of spirituality and the Anabaptist view essential to the entire book.



In each chapter, Dyck introduces the author of a writing before the piece, which I found helpful in better understanding the authors' reasoning in their writing. Many of the writings are teachings, in which the writer desires to help the congregation learn more about biblical living in its many aspects. We in the modern world have much to learn from our forebears' experiences.

I found the most compelling writings in the chapter "Letters of Faith and Encouragement," especially the letters between the imprisoned husband and wife, Jerome Segersz and Lijsken (Elizabeth Dirks), and the letter from Anna Jansz to her son Isaiah.

C.J. Dyck has provided Anabaptists today with another work that can strengthen our own walk with the Lord. Read this book and use it, with your Bible, in your prayer and devotional times to reflect on God's work and leading in your life as we all enter a new century.

Resources

- **"Trek"** is a Mennonite Central Committee four-week guide to help individuals and groups with too many material goods and too little time explore the question "What is enough?" Available for free from your nearest MCC office; from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; or from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.
- **An Advocacy Handbook**, prepared by Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office, helps Mennonites witness to government. The handbook explains the biblical basis and Anabaptist approach to advocacy and suggestions for intercessory prayer for government authorities. Order from MCC Washington Office, 110 Maryland Ave. NE #502, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 544-6564. Handbooks are $2 U.S. each or $1.50 each for 10 or more copies.
- **Seeking to Be Faithful** by Harvey Plett (Evangelical Mennonite Conference, 1996) is the history of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference of Canada (Kleine Gemeinde). Available from EMC, Box 1268, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0; $6.95 Cdn.
- **Reshaping Your Marriage**, edited by A. Don Augsburger (Masthof Press, 1996, $9.95 U.S.), contains essays on the problems of marriage relationships.
- **Families Creating a Circle of Peace**, compiled by Jim McGinnis, Ken and Gretchen Lovingood and Jim Vogt (Institute for Peace and Justice, 1996, $5 U.S.), is a guide for living a family pledge of nonviolence.
- **The Compact Guide to World Religions**, Dean C. Halverson, general editor (Bethany House, 1996, $8.99 U.S.), originally designed for use by families hosting exchange students, is a guide to major world faiths.
- **What Are They Saying About Masculine Spirituality?** by David D. James (Paulist Press, 1996, $9.95 U.S.) examines what male spirituality looks like and asks if there can be a male spirituality that is not anti-woman.

**************CAR-RT SORT**C-023
034421.0 00000 517
Library
Assoc Menn Biblical Sem
3003 Benham Ave
Elkhart IN 46517-1947

Editorial

Thrown away

Increasingly we find ourselves living in a throwaway society. We discard last year's newest product in order to buy this year's, last year's clothes for the newest fashions. Our landfills bulge with our refuse.

Even more tragic is that our habit of throwing away is applied to people. Married couples discard each other, parents discard their children, companies discard their employees, governments discard any who don't have the money or power to stand up to them.

Paul C. Fox calls our attention to a recent trend of discarding our elderly (page 3). Harsh as this sounds, it often arises out of desperate situations. As community bonds have broken down in our society, people find themselves forced to care for their aging parents on their own, without the resources to offer proper care. People pass on responsibility to others. Let the government care for them, some say, but don't ask us to pay more taxes. In the end, many elderly people die lonely, with only superficial care.

Such a state is not what God intends. The Bible consistently calls for special care for the weak and vulnerable in society. Psalm 68 calls God a "father of orphans and protector of widows" (verse 5), who "gives the desolate a home to live in" (verse 6).

> *Being faithful to a God who is "a father of widows and protector of orphans" requires that we, too, show care for the vulnerable, that we live as a community that chooses not to discard those who burden us.*

Being faithful to such a God requires that we, too, show care for the vulnerable, that we live as a community that chooses not to discard those who burden us.

One hindrance to faithful care for the elderly is the way we isolate ourselves from them. In their book *Aging* (Image, 1976), Henri J.M. Nouwen and Walter J. Gaffney write that "real care takes place when we are no longer separated by the walls of fear but have found each other on the common ground of the human condition, which is mortal but, therefore, very very precious."

Illusion: The elderly remind us of our mortality. We may shut ourselves off from them because we don't want to think about our lives ending. Yet in doing so we are living an illusion, and we deprive ourselves of the wisdom of those who are nearing the end of their lives.

Nouwen and Gaffney write that "the most important contribution to the elderly is to offer them a chance to bring us into a creative contact with our own aging." My father, who is now 82, teaches me not to fear death. He shows me it is something we have little control over and thus is not worth fighting.

As my body makes me more aware of my aging I have the opportunity to recognize my limitations and learn from them. In November, Jeanne, my wife, was diagnosed with breast cancer. While that has been difficult, we have learned much and have been drawn closer to God.

We have also witnessed the love of God through our church community and friends who have supported us with prayers, calls, flowers, meals and cards. We cannot imagine going through this experience without such support. Yet many have to.

If we in the church are to be salt and light in a society that discards its people right and left, we must face our own limitations, our own mortality. We must be a community that cares for one another while reaching out to others who are hurting and isolated. We must break down any walls of fear that separate us.

Let us invite the elderly among us to offer their wisdom so that we all may be more faithful to the God we worship.
Gordon Houser

Recyclable

Index 1996

SUBJECT

Issue number is listed first, then page number.

Abuse

Enns, Aiden Schlichting, Abuse victim speaks out, 8/17

Adoption

Mark, Ruth A., Adoption pains are preventable, 7/9

Advent (See Christmas)

Africa

Looking for peace in Zaire, 23/17
Regier, Fremont and Sara, Weapons buyback works in Mozambique, 2/13
Zehr, Howard, Sudanese grass roots push for peace, 2/14; Sudanese women work for peace, 2/16

Aging

Bachman, Elda, Grandma takes Greek, 24/8
Fox, Paul C., Granny dumping, 24/3
Houk, Margaret, The real meaning of love, 24/6
Houser, Gordon, Thrown away, 24/24
Sevilla, Janice Waltner, Album, 24/7
What goes around comes around, 24/5

AIDS

Sensenig, Pearl, AIDS exacts toll in Swaziland, 12/13

Art

Balzer, Susan, Arts weekend focuses on the body, 6/17
Letters, 6/9

Asian Ministry

Reimer, Carla, Toronto: a city on a hill, 8/3; Faithful despite financial hardships, 8/4; 'We just need time,' 8/5; Do God's work regardless of risks, 8/6; 'They had strength inside them,' 8/7; Reaching out to a 'lost generation,' 8/8

Baptism

Ahlgrim, Ryan, What are the requirements for baptism?, 9/3
Houser, Gordon, Look beyond the sign, 9/24
Janzen, Dorothea, To be or not to be rebaptized, 9/6
Letters, 12/8
Memories of baptism, 9/7; 9/10
Swora, Mathew, Friends of Jesus, 9/8

Bethel College

Zuercher, Melanie A., Bethel honors native theologian, 22/13

Bible

Brown, Mitchell, God wants justice, mercy and humility, 6/11
Byler, J. Daryl, Voting rights, voting wrong, 19/10
Diaz, Octavio, Strangers in their own land, 4/10
Divine titles in the Bible [crossword puzzle], 5/8
Fast, Darrell, Our God the three-in-one, 22/12; The Christ of faith in the Jesus of history, 23/10; The breath of God, 24/9
Houser, Gordon, All shook up, 5/24
Maffeo, Richard, The empty roar, 16/11
Montgomery, Anne, From Ur to Hebron, 14/10
Mosher, Steve, A risky mission of mercy, 18/10
Nickel, Lois, *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*, 22/23
Placher, William C., Be willing to do the work, 5/7
Ratzlaff, Don, Welcome to literal church, 5/10
Reimer, Carla, A book with the power to shake us up, 5/6
Rempel-Burkholder, Byron, Join the outsiders, 2/11
Shelly, Karl S., On the road to Jairus' house, 12/12
Showalter, Nathan, We can learn a lot from Lot, 5/12
Sportack, Laura, The example of Jesus' hands, 7/6
Stoner, John K., The long shadow of the centurion, 7/10

Burkina Faso

A cup of water in the name of Christ, 12/17
Sensenig, Pearl, A new window on the world, 3/11

Burundi

Burundi MCCers respond to growing violence, 6/14
Burundi needs more dialogue, negotiations, 16/16
MCCers witness aftermath of Burundi atrocity, 16/15
Stauffer, Ardell, Christians killing Christians, 6/15
Yoder, Suzy, Reflections on death from a war zone, 18/11

Children

Guarino, Jean, Be careful what you say, 17/8
Houser, Gordon, Let the children come, 17/3; Bless the children, 17/24
Letters, 20/11
Martin, Mariann, What about the children?, 17/6
Preller, Denise, How to talk with your children about death, 10/12; Food fight, 14/11; Does God play ball?, 20/12
What parents can do, 17/9

China

Byler, Myrl, China closes orphanages to foreigners, 10/19
CEE assigns workers to Chinese orphanage, 4/15
Reimer, Carla, China churches 'full of the Spirit,' 15/16

Christian Education

Bachman, Elda, Grandma takes Greek, 24/8
Cannell, Linda, Should we eliminate Sunday school?, 18/7
Houser, Gordon, A holy calling, 18/24
Letters, 20/11; 21/10
Regier, Rosella Wiens, A Jubilee journey, 18/3
Reimer, Carla, New curriculum gets warm reception, 2/17; Stirling Avenue involves parents, 2/18; A time for reflection and rejuvenation, 3/9; ACT weekend renews Sunday school teachers, 3/17; Conference focuses on adult education, 5/18

Christian Life

Bush, Perry, Drawing the line on who we are, 13/6
Hallsted, Bill D., Vacation expenses, 12/7
Houk, Margaret, The real meaning of love, 24/6
Houser, Gordon, Under God's reign, 13/24; Reflect God's reign together, 16/24; The danger of soullessness, 19/24
Penner, Larry, The work of belief: letting go, 7/24
Reimer, Carla, From 007 fan to ardent pacifist, 13/3

Christian Peacemaker Teams

CPTers close crack house, 6/13
Gish, Art, 48 hours in an Israeli jail, 3/14
Hebron CPTers arrested, then released, 12/16
Lehman, Wendy, Lessons from court in Israel, 2/16
Letters, 23/10
Penner, Larry, CPTers plan to ride bus route recently struck by bombers, 6/14
Some sanctions are lifted in Iraq, 12/19

Christmas

Bergen, Walter, A little love in a dark corner, 23/7
Friesen, Mel D., The real meaning of Christmas, 23/6
Hange, Maren Tyedmers, The Table of Mary, 23/3
Houk, Margaret, Christmas during sad times, 23/8
Houser, Gordon, Keep awake, 23/24
Penner, Larry, Songs of suffering and anticipation, 23/9
Ruth, Fern Pankratz, Can you believe it?, 23/5
Wiebe, Menno, down to earth, 23/5

Church Buildings

Bowman, Ray with Eddy Hall, The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome, 12/3; Business debt vs. church debt, 12/6

Church Burnings

Church is more than a building, 17/20
Franz, Shella, NDC passes resolution on church burnings, 14/18
MDS rebuilds church destroyed by arsonists, 11/15
Miller Shearer, Jody, Project builds racial awareness, new church, 13/18
Preheim, Rich, Celebrants say that God and MDS were good, 19/13; Extra funds benefit Boligee, 19/14
Resolution against burning churches, 14/19
Youth raise the rafters, 17/18

Church Life

Bowman, Ray with Eddy Hall, The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome, 12/3; Business debt vs. church debt, 12/6
Houser, Gordon, The company you keep, 15/24; Reflect God's reign together, 16/24
James, Leslie, Reflect, rejoice and respond, 11/8
Kropf, Marlene, Which way Mennonite worship?, 11/3
Neufeld, Hugo, Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?, 15/3
Preheim, Rich, Churches face dilemma of members in military, 23/13
Reimer, Carla, Large churches must recognize size matters, 20/13
Thiessen, Carol, Regular, decaf or NRSV?, 24/17

Church Planting

Letters, 6/9

Churches

Breaking the bank for mission, 24/18
Church is more than a building, 17/20
East Coast churches distribute food, 2/19
Houser, Gordon, Better business through celebration, 6/24
Letters, 9/10
Miller, J.B., Merit pay for church leaders?, 9/12
Penner, Larry, Kansas church closes after 95 years, 2/18; Goshen churches house homeless, 3/13
Preheim, Vern, Six dreams for the future, 12/24
Price, Tom, Church stresses mission all year, 22/17
Reimer, Carla, New curriculum gets warm reception, 2/17; Stirling Avenue involves parents, 2/18; Indonesian minister walks by faith, 6/19; Christians face challenges everywhere, 6/19; Pastor empowers immigrants, 6/20; Toronto: a city on a hill, 8/3; Faithful despite financial hardships, 8/4; 'We just need time,' 8/5; Do God's work regardless of risks, 8/6; 'They had strength inside them,' 8/7; Reaching out to a 'lost generation,' 8/8; Church has unusual activities, 11/17
Thiessen, Carol, Regular, decaf or NRSV?, 24/17

City on a Hill

Denver chosen for City on a Hill, 1/13
Reimer, Carla, Toronto: a city on a hill, 8/3; Faithful despite financial hardships, 8/4; 'We just need time,' 8/5; Do God's work regardless of risks, 8/6; 'They had strength inside them,' 8/7; Reaching out to a 'lost generation,' 8/8

Colombia

Albrecht, Frank Soto, The destructive reach of war, 7/3
Colombian works for peace with justice, 20/15
Reimer, Carla, Lessons from Mennonites in Colombia, 6/12; Living with fear and uncertainty, 6/12; Faith is essential for Colombian Mennonites, 15/17

Commonwealth of Independent States

Bergen, Walter, A little love in a dark corner, 23/7
Reimer, Carla, Ukrainians want to talk about Christianity, 14/14; 'The church is all we have for our souls,' 14/15; 'We've waited so long for this day,' 19/16
Wert, Carol L., Cold War reminders warmed by new friendships, 24/15
Will, Emily, Cheese factory goes to Siberia, 10/14

Communications

Letters, 5/9; 7/8; 10/9; 12/8; 14/9; 17/10; 18/9; 19/8; 21/10; 24/9
TM appoints new assistant editor, 10/14

Conferences

Franz, Shella, NDC passes resolution on church burnings, 14/18
Heinrichs, Marj, In search of another side, 11/14
Heinrichs, Marj and Susan Brandt, Women hold third theology conference, 11/13
Houser, Gordon, Better business through celebration, 6/24
Steffen, Wayne, Conflict marks Menno history, conference finds, 13/16
Weaver, Valerie, Mennos consider ideals vs. realities of institutions, 14/13
Will, Emily, Hispanic Anabaptists meet to combine gifts, 13/15
Zuercher, Melanie, CMC celebrates 'life in the Spirit,' 15/15

Conflict Resolution

Boers, Arthur P., Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war, 5/3
Colombian works for peace with justice, 20/15
Poston, Chip and John Longhurst, First mediation center in West Bank opens, 1/15
Price, Tom, Menno mediator: Reconciliation is like a dance, 20/14

Culture

Boers, Arthur P., Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war, 5/3
Letters, 8/9

Death, Dying

King, Ronda Suderman, Lent: a time to face our dying, 3/3
Preller, Denise, How to talk with your children about death, 10/12

Death Penalty

Risser, Christy, Church worker witnesses execution, 6/16
Ross, Michael B., You can bring light to death row, 6/10

Disabilities

Honn, Terry, Doyle taught me about love, 15/8
Houser, Gordon, The company you keep, 15/24
Knape, Jeanne, Visions of art, 15/5
Neufeld, Hugo, Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?, 15/3
Summer, Eddie, The day the Mennonites visited me, 15/6
Swora, Mathew, Friends of Jesus, 9/8

Easter

Buller, Diane Mierau, The agony of Easter, 6/5
Epp-Tiessen, Dan, The resurrection: promise of a new body, 6/3
Gibble, Kenneth L., Plotting the resurrection, 6/6
Raber, Mary, A sympathy card for Easter, 3/8
Regier, Fremont, Dying with Christ on Good Friday, 3/7
Rempel, John, The Passion, 6/8
Ruth, Fern Pankratz, The crucified, 6/8
Wiebe, Menno, palm sunday, 6/5

European Mennonites

Reimer, Margaret Loewen, Mennonites in Europe today, 10/3; Mennonite groups in Europe (1995), 10/5; Peace church heritage lost and found, 10/6; Alternative service in Europe, 10/6; Upheavals and migrations, 10/7
Penner, Lydia, European Mennos consider future of church, 13/18; The relevance of the gospel, 14/8
Risser, Christy, Work means playing games with barrio kids, 10/9

Evangelism

Letters, 13/9; 14/9; 15/9; 16/8
Northey, Wayne, When evangelism is a heresy, 10/11

Family

Guarino, Jean, Be careful what you say, 17/8
Preller, Denise, How to talk with your children about death, 10/12; Food fight, 14/11; Does God play ball?, 20/12
Shenk, Sara Wenger, How to keep our children safe, 9/11; 'More sing, Mama,' 12/10
What parents can do, 17/9

From Our Mission Workers

1/11; 2/10; 3/10; 6/9; 7/8; 8/9; 18/9; 19/9; 20/11

Gambling

Price, Tom, Meeting on gambling asks, 'What's the church to do?,' 4/18; The bad with the good, 4/19

General Conference Mennonite Church

Board appoints Schrag general secretary, 7/13
COE executive secretary resigns, 22/15
Denver chosen for City on a Hill, 1/13
DGS looks at communications, finances, 22/15
FLP cuts staff positions, 8/17
Guete resigns from CHM, 5/19
Hauder, Larry, Why I believe in conference, 8/10

Houser, Gordon, Better business through celebration, 6/24; CHM approves proposal to look at integration of service programs, 7/17
Integration dominates GC board meetings, 21/16
Linscheid, Dave, Council of Commissions focuses on integration, 7/14; DGS considers fund-raising campaign and stewardship, 7/15
MVS associate director resigns, 10/17
New MVS director named, 4/14
New staff begins work at GC office, 14/20
Penner, Larry, COM increases number of mission workers, looks to future, 7/18
Preheim, Rich, Pricey lawsuit derailed by new legislation, 2/14; Boards discuss unity, new name, conventions, 23/15; Ministerial leadership merger proposal slowed, 23/16
Preheim, Vern, Six dreams for the future, 12/24
Reimer, Carla, Giving Project hopes to build theology of money, 1/16; New curriculum gets warm reception, 2/17; Stirling Avenue involves parents, 2/18; Ministerial offices ready to merge, 4/14; Task force appointed to deal with FLP's bottom line, 7/16; Preheim devotes life to service, 16/19; New Hispanic director has heart for mission, 23/17
TM appoints new assistant editor, 10/14
Weaver, Valerie, Women's groups continue work of integration, 21/15
Working toward Winnipeg, 21/14

Government

Letters, 10/9

Guatemala

Stauffer, Ardell, Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala, 18/19

Haiti

Apprehension and hope co-exist in Haiti, 12/14
Stauffer, Ardell, MCC work changes in new Haitian political order, 12/15
Will, Emily, MCCers in Haiti intervene in mob violence, 17/13; Haiti heads back into instability, 19/16
Witmer, Terry Phibbs, MCCer describes feelings in verse ("In the presence of Christ weeping"), 17/14

Higher Education

Enns, Aiden Schlichting, Three colleges move closer to joining forces, 14/16

Hispanic

Will, Emily, Hispanic Anabaptists meet to combine gifts, 13/15

Holy Spirit

Houser, Gordon, We are not alone, 10/24

Homeless

Graybill, Danielle, "I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui,'" 18/15
Penner, Larry, Goshen churches house homeless, 3/13
Youth gain new perspective on homeless, 18/15

Homosexuality

Anonymous, 'Inviting all to God's Table,' 15/14
Letters, 17/10; 19/8; 24/9
Quintela, Helen Wells, Conference models an inclusive church, 15/13

Ideas Your Church Can Try

2/11; 8/9

India

Faber, Connie, Mennonites in India: Mennonite Brethren Church, 22/7
Hosts for India 1997, 22/9
How to travel in another culture, 2/6
India 1997: Assembly Gathered Schedule, 2/4
Nussbaumer, Louise, In search of Calcutta, 2/5
Preheim, Rich, Mennonites in India: United Missionary Church, 22/8
Sensenig, Pearl, More than 30 years of service in Calcutta [Margaret Devadason], 2/12
Shantz, Marcus, A time to hear the Spirit, 2/3
Sider, Harvey R., Mennonites in India: Brethren in Christ, 22/10
Unrau, Ruth, Mennonites in India: General Conference Mennonite Church, 22/3
Weaver, Valerie, Mennonites in India: Mennonite Church, 22/6

Indonesia

Reimer, Carla, Indonesian minister walks by faith, 6/19; Christians face challenges everywhere, 6/19; Pastor empowers immigrants, 6/20
Sensenig, Pearl, 'Strangers no more,' 22/11

Integration

Houser, Gordon, CHM approves proposal to look at integration of service programs, 7/17; We're all on the table, 8/24; Integration Committee proposes models, 21/13
Integration dominates GC board meetings, 21/16
Letters, 9/10; 12/8
Linscheid, Dave, Council of Commissions focuses on integration, 7/14
Peachey, J. Lorne, Committee suggests new name for new church, 8/13
Preheim, Rich, Boards discuss unity, new name, conventions, 23/15; Ministerial leadership merger proposal slowed, 23/16
Reimer, Carla, VS staffs ready for merger, 4/13; Ministerial offices ready to merge, 4/14

Steelberg, Don, A proposal for worship in the new denomination, 11/10
Weaver, Valerie, Women's groups continue work of integration, 21/15

Iraq

Letters, 19/9
Pereverzoff, Paul, Baghdad journal, 12/18
Sensenig, Pearl, Missiles fall, aid to Iraq detained, 19/15
Some sanctions are lifted in Iraq, 12/19

Kenya

Sensenig, Pearl, Kenyans try to avoid Somalia's chaos, 18/18

King, Martin Luther

Smucker, Donovan E., The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., 1/10

Korea

Sensenig, Pearl, North Korean famine exceeds Ethiopia's in '80s, 20/18

Labor

Bystrom, Ray, Called by God in whatever you do, 16/6
Letters, 19/8

Labrador

Longhurst, John, NATO flights in Labrador double, 10/15

Landmines

Peachey, Byron, The staggering cost of landmines, 8/15
Peachey, Byron and Joanne Epp, U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines, 8/14
Wiebe, Virgil, Why not support self-destruct landmines?, 8/16

Laos

Longhurst, John, Childhood deaths bind Winnipeg mother to Laotians, 5/14

Lent

Buxman, Bob, Garbage and repentance, 3/8
Eschleman, Christa, Sharing with those who mourn, 3/7
Frantz, Tom, Stones into bread?, 3/5
Houser, Gordon, Life in the fast(ing) lane, 3/24
King, Jonathan and Rosalie, A humble foot washing, 3/6
King, Ronda Suderman, Lent: a time to face our dying, 3/3; Ideas for Lent, 3/5
Martin, Earl, Take, this is for eating, 3/6
Raber, Mary, A sympathy card for Easter, 3/8
Regier, Fremont, Dying with Christ on Good Friday, 3/7
Reimer, Carla, A time for reflection and rejuvenation, 3/9

Liberia

Price, Tom, Menno preaches peace in war-torn Liberia, 9/13; Students become Liberia's ambassadors of peace, 9/14; Liberian church leader feels like biblical exiles, 19/17

Mediation (See Conflict Resolution)

Menno Simons

Happy birthday, Menno!, 2/7

Mennonite Central Committee

A cup of water in the name of Christ, 12/17
Apprehension and hope co-exist in Haiti, 12/14
Burundi MCCers respond to growing violence, 6/14
Burundi needs more dialogue, negotiations, 16/16
East Coast churches distribute food, 2/19
Fast, Deborah, Atlanta Olympics try to hide the city's poor, 16/16; Atlanta unit closes after 35 years of service, 24/19
Groff, Gwen, Workers discuss how to work with trauma victims, 18/16
Journalist finds Mennonite hero, 14/17
Jumping into the canning season, 22/14
Longhurst, John, Childhood deaths bind Winnipeg mother to Laotians, 5/14; NATO flights in Labrador double, 10/15; MCC Canada exec approves downsizing, 14/16; Programs help keep workers off welfare, 15/18; A 10-year promise to serve overseas, 18/12
Looking for peace in Zaire, 23/17
MCC plans to help churches connect overseas, 5/15
MCC U.S. discusses racism in the church, 5/16
MCC visit to Zaire reveals great need, 24/16
MCCers witness aftermath of Burundi atrocity, 16/15
Peachey, Byron and Joanne Epp, U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines, 8/14
Penner, Larry, MCC boards process change, 21/17
Pereverzoff, Paul, Baghdad journal, 12/18
Poston, Chip and John Longhurst, First mediation center in West Bank opens, 1/15
Project confronts racism in Menno institutions, 3/13
Regier, Fremont and Sara, Weapons buyback works in Mozambique, 2/13
Self-Help gets new board of directors, 5/16
Sensenig, Pearl, MCC discusses workers in violent settings, 10/16; AIDS exacts toll in Swaziland, 12/13; Kenyans try to avoid Somalia's chaos, 18/18; Service that's 'women-friendly,' 19/3; At the bottom of the social heap, 19/6; Missiles fall, aid to Iraq detained, 19/15; North Korean famine exceeds Ethiopia's in '80s, 20/18; 'Strangers no more,' 22/11
Shirey, Melinda, Walking the bridge, 24/12
Simpson, Deb, Gender is a factor in each culture, 19/7
Stauffer, Ardell, Christians killing Christians, 6/15; MCC work changes in new Haitian political order, 12/15; Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala, 18/19
Terichow, Gladys, Mennos help Winnipeggers on welfare get jobs, 9/15
Time to let out the seams, 23/14
Wiest, Kathy Heinrichs, Drama reflects players' lives, 19/18

Will, Emily, Cheese factory goes to Siberia, 10/14; MCCers in Haiti intervene in mob violence, 17/13; Haiti heads back into instability, 19/16
Witmer, Terry Phibbs, MCCer describes feelings in verse ("In the presence of Christ weeping"), 17/14
Yoder, Suzy, Reflections on death from a war zone, 18/11
Zehr, Howard, Sudanese grass roots push for peace, 2/14; Sudanese women work for peace, 2/16

Mennonite Disaster Service

MDS rebuilds church destroyed by arsonists, 11/15
MDS uses new technology, barely makes budget, 5/17
Preheim, Rich, Celebrants say that God and MDS were good, 19/13; Extra funds benefit Boligee, 19/14
Youth raise the rafters, 17/18

Mennonite Economic Development Associates

Terichow, Gladys, Mennos help Winnipeggers on welfare get jobs, 9/15
Thiessen, Carol, MEDA offers loans to Tanzanian women, 6/17

Mennonite Identity

Bush, Perry, Drawing the line on who we are, 13/6
Houser, Gordon, Under God's reign, 13/24; Call me Mennonite, 14/24
Letters, 16/8; 16/9; 17/10; 19/8; 19/10; 21/10
Longhurst, John, What's in a name?, 14/3; Proud to be a Mennonite, 14/6
Penner, Lydia, The relevance of the gospel, 14/8
Preheim, Rich, Identity and mission, 19/11
Reimer, Carla, From 007 fan to ardent pacifist, 13/3

Mennonite Mutual Aid

MMA reports record growth, 5/17

Mennonite Voluntary Service

(See Voluntary Service)

Mennonite World Conference

Faber, Connie, Mennonites in India: Mennonite Brethren Church, 22/7
Good, Phyllis Pellman, A time to draw together, 2/8
Hosts for India 1997, 22/9
Houser, Gordon, It's a small world, 2/24
How to travel in another culture, 2/6
India 1997: Assembly Gathered Schedule, 2/4
Nussbaumer, Louise, In search of Calcutta, 2/5
Preheim, Rich, Mennonites in India: United Missionary Church, 22/8
Roth, Willard E., Mennonite World Conference looks beyond 1997, 18/13; Project records non-Western Mennonite history, 18/14
Sensenig, Pearl, More than 30 years of service in Calcutta [Margaret Devadason], 2/12
Shantz, Marcus, A time to hear the Spirit, 2/3
Sider, Harvey R., Mennonites in India: Brethren in Christ, 22/10
Unrau, Ruth, Mennonites in India: General Conference Mennonite Church, 22/3
Weaver, Valerie, Mennonites in India: Mennonite Church, 22/6

Mennonites

A labor of love, 9/16
Block, Lynette Klassen, A life of service [Robert Epp], 16/10
Board appoints [James] Schrag general secretary, 7/13
Bush, Perry, Drawing the line on who we are, 13/6
Colombian works for peace with justice [Ricardo Esquivia], 20/15
Heinrichs, Marj, A little heaven on earth [Nick Janz], 12/11
Houser, Gordon, Let the children come [Kristin Neufeld Epp], 17/3
Journalist finds Mennonite hero [Margaret De Jong], 14/17
Letters, 1/11; 2/10; 7/8; 9/10; 20/11
Longhurst, John, A 10-year promise to serve overseas [Janet Schmidt and David Pankratz], 18/12
Martin, Mariann, What about the children [Martha Martin], 17/6
Mears Driedger, June, Seminaries and congregations [Ross Bender], 15/11
Price, Tom, Menno mediator: Reconciliation is like a dance [John Paul Lederach], 20/14
Reimer, Carla, A book with the power to shake us up [Danielle Goering and Jack Dyck], 5/6; Living with fear and uncertainty [Jack and Irene Suderman], 6/12; Let's give the Holy Spirit more credence [Jeff Wright], 8/12; From 007 fan to ardent pacifist [Tom Oliver], 13/3; A reconciler between cultures [Anne Garber Kampaore], 14/12; Preheim devotes life to service [Vern Preheim], 16/19
Risser, Christy, Work means playing games with barrio kids [Margrit Kipfer], 10/9
Sensenig, Pearl, More than 30 years of service in Calcutta [Margaret Devadason], 2/12; A new window on the world [Kristen Linkletter], 3/11; 'Strangers no more' [Mark Schaub], 22/11
Stauffer, Ardell, Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala, 18/19
Stauffer, Chris Huebert, 'As long as God gives me the strength' [Evelyn Lambert], 17/11
Yoder, Suzy, Reflections on death from a war zone [Susan Seitz], 18/11

Mental Health

Letters, 2/11; 3/10; 5/9; 6/9

Mexico

Bible training program goes to Mexico, 4/16
Boschmann, Erwin, A call for help, 4/11
Diaz, Octavio, Strangers in their own land, 4/10
Mexican Mennos hold national meeting, 9/17
Reimer, Carla, Mexican ministers know how to evangelize, 4/17

Middle East

Byler, J. Daryl, Peace and security with justice in the Middle East, 21/24
Gish, Art, 48 hours in an Israeli jail, 3/14
Hebron CPTers arrested, then released, 12/16
Lehman, Wendy, Lessons from court in Israel, 2/16; Deceptive signs of peace, 21/8
Letters, 23/10
Pauls, Carmen, A litany for peace in Jerusalem, 21/7
'Peace must be based on justice,' 21/5
Poston, Chip and John Longhurst, First mediation center in West Bank opens, 1/15
Zuercher, Melanie A., Crying 'peace' when there is no peace, 21/3

Ministry

Bystrom, Ray, Called by God in whatever you do, 16/6
Morsch, Gary with Eddy Hall, Christ has no hands but ours, 16/3
Naylor, Ruth, But to minister?, 16/5
Peachey, J. Lorne, Are we redefining pastoral leadership?, 16/13; 'Fall in love' with those you serve, 16/14
Reimer, Carla, Youth minister shares tips for youth groups, 3/15

Mission

'Being faithful is what counts,' says missionary, 9/19
Bible training program goes to Mexico, 4/16
Breaking the bank for mission, 24/18
CEE assigns workers to Chinese orphanage, 4/15
'Clap your hands, all you people,' 15/18
Denver chosen for City on a Hill, 1/13
Houser, Gordon, Make worship our mission, 11/24
Letters, 9/10
Longhurst, John, A 10-year promise to serve overseas, 18/12
Mears, June, AMBS plans to host mission institute, 1/18
Preheim, Rich, Identity and mission, 19/11
Price, Tom, Meeting on gambling asks, 'What's the church to do?,' 4/18; The bad with the good, 4/19; Church stresses mission all year, 22/17
Reimer, Carla, $250,000 center dedicated in South Korea, 1/13; Mexican ministers know how to evangelize, 4/17; China churches 'full of the Spirit,' 15/16; Faith is essential for Colombian Mennonites, 15/17
Risser, Christy, 'MK' returns to reconnect with his past, 24/18
Sawatzky, Sheldon, Taiwan church sends first missionary, 4/15
Sensenig, Pearl, Service that's 'women-friendly,' 19/3; At the bottom of the social heap, 19/6
Simpson, Deb, Gender is a factor in each culture, 19/7
Yoder, Suzy, Reflections on death from a war zone, 18/11

Mozambique

Regier, Fremont and Sara, Weapons buyback works in Mozambique, 2/13

Native

Reimer, Carla, Mission school has first full-time Hopi teacher, 24/13
Wenger, Malcolm, Native groups meet in Montana, 17/15

Northern Ireland

Lederach, John M. and Naomi, A time for weeping in Ireland, 17/17
Price, Tom, Sabbatical renews mediator for work in Northern Ireland, 18/20; Fire damages church where worker will serve, 22/16

Olympic Games

Fast, Deborah, Atlanta Olympics try to hide the city's poor, 16/16
Olympic Games attenders visit Peace Factory, 16/17
Reimer, Carla, Bombing brings terrorism home, 16/18

Orthodox Church

Boers, Arthur, Majestic, centuries-old worship, 11/11

Peace

Albrecht, Frank Soto, The destructive reach of war, 7/3
Boers, Arthur P., Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war, 5/3
Bush, Perry, Drawing the line on who we are, 13/6
Goossen, Walfried, Pacifism: a Mennonite heresy?, 13/11
Houser, Gordon, Under God's reign, 13/24
Letters, 15/9; 21/10; 23/10
Niswander, Joanne, Godiva's watch, 7/5
Preheim, Rich, Churches face dilemma of members in military, 23/13
Reimer, Carla, From 007 fan to ardent pacifist, 13/3
Sportack, Laura, The example of Jesus' hands, 7/6
Stoner, John K., The long shadow of the centurion, 7/10

Peace Factory

Olympic Games attenders visit Peace Factory, 16/17
Reimer, Carla, Bombing brings terrorism home, 16/18

Poetry

Buller, Diane Mierau, The agony of Easter, 6/5
Fransen, Sharon, Kansas last spring, 15/7
Janzen, Jean, After the martyrs exhibit, 13/5
Kroeker, Ellen, A shock of grace, passion, 19/5
Naylor, Ruth, Investment, 4/5; But to minister?, 16/5
Niswander, Joanne, Godiva's watch, 7/5
Rinehart, Nancy J., Ice and fire, 10/8
Ruth, Fern Pankratz, The crucified, 6/8; Can you believe it?, 23/5
Sauder, Renee, In the grip of God's love, 11/7
Sevilla, Janice Waltner, Album, 24/7
Wiebe, Menno, Harmony, 2/9; palm sunday, 6/5; preacher of the faith, 8/10; down to earth, 23/5
Witmer, Terry Phibbs, MCCer describes feelings in verse ("In the presence of Christ weeping"), 17/14

Politics

Byler, J. Daryl, Voting rights, voting wrong, 19/10

Prayer

Kropf, Marlene, Seeking God's face in prayer, 4/12; Teach a child to pray, 8/11; Does anyone pray for enemies?, 12/9; Praying in the evening, 16/12; Praying with icons, 21/11; Create a prayer calendar, 24/11
Letters, 13/8
Sauder, Renee, In the grip of God's love, 11/7

Prisoners

Letters, 2/11
Reimer, Carla, Music breaks barriers for inmates, 13/13; Kansas has chorus instead of chain gang, 13/14
Ross, Michael B., You can bring light to death row, 6/10

Racism

A baker's dozen: Ways your congregation can work against racism, 1/7
A quiz on racism, 1/8
A short history of race, 1/5
Damascus Road works to dismantle racism, 12/16
Houser, Gordon, The color of our sin, 1/24
Keener, Craig, A white convert to the black church, 1/6
Letters, 5/9
Logan, James Samuel, In search of a true communion, 1/3
Miller Shearer, Jody, Project builds racial awareness, new church, 13/18
Project confronts racism in Menno institutions, 3/13
Smucker, Donovan E., The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., 1/10
Some Scriptures on the subject of racism, 1/9
Wiest, Kathy Heinrichs, Drama reflects players' lives, 19/18

Reviews

Bade, Michael, *Wonder and Blue*, 13/22
Bartel, Floyd G., *By the Waters of Babylon*, 11/22
Bartow, David, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 8/23
Bechtel, Trevor G. H., *Creation at Risk?*, 22/23
Bergen, Wesley, *Ezekiel*, 20/23
Boers, Arthur P., *Transforming Congregations for the Future*, 3/22; *The Crown and the Fire* and *Following Jesus*, 9/22; *Why We Live in Community*, 14/23; *Take and Read* and *The Bible for Everyday Life*, 20/22
Bogard, Marlene, *The Radical Reign* and *You Can't Make Me Go to Church*, 14/22
Brown, Mitchell, *Godwrestling*, 20/22
Chappell, Ben, *As I Am*, 3/21; *What We Have Tasted*, 13/22
Daught, Gary, *A Non-Churchgoer's Guide to the Bible*, 2/22
Deckert, Marion, *The Abandoned Generation*, 6/23
Driedger, Kevin, *Doing Life*, 23/23
Duerksen, Norma Peters, *Growing Together*, 21/22
Dyck, Edna, *We Are the Pharisees*, 18/23
Dyck, George, *Satanic Ritual Abuse*, 6/23
Dyck, Mary, *Caregiver's Gethsemane*, 10/22
Ellison, Charlotte A., *Amazing Grace*, 17/22
Frey, Mark, *Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership*, 18/22
Gerig, Joan, *Uprooting Racism*, 16/22
Goossen, Rachel Waltner, *In Search of Unity*, 23/23
Hain, Lu Ann, *Understanding Gangs*, 2/22
Harder, Mark Diller, *Living Unplugged*, 21/22
Hawkley, Ken, *Rediscovering the Sacred*, 9/22
Herr, Judy Zimmerman, *God's Wrathful Children*, 4/22
Hieb, Barry, *Bioethics and the Future of Medicine*, 3/23
Hostetler, Sheri, *Godward*, 17/22
Houser, Gordon, *The Silence of Angels*, 2/21; *Violence Unveiled*, 5/22; *The English Patient*, 24/22
Houser, Jeanne, *Raising Peaceful Children in a Violent World*, 14/22
James, Leslie, *Words for Worship*, 15/22
Janzen, David, *Simplicity*, 7/23
Janzen, Heinz, *The Awesome Power of Shared Beliefs*, 2/22
Kern, Kathleen, *Minor Prophets Major Themes*, 12/23
Klassen, Dale and Beverly Lapp, *41 Ways to a Better Youth Group*, 12/23
Koontz, Ted, *Entrepreneurs in the Faith Community*, 21/23
Kraus, C. Norman, *Who Killed Jesus?*, 4/23; *Global Gods*, 8/22
Kroeker, Wally, *God on the Job*, 18/22
Landis, Susan Mark, *Peace Ministry*, 6/22
Lemons, Don S., *The Fire in the Equations*, 11/23
Liechty, Daniel, *The Royal Priesthood*, 10/23
Mears Driedger, June, *The Cloister Walk*, 15/22
Meyer, Jocele, *Keeping the Garden*, 22/22
Morton, Karla, *Cease Fire*, 2/21; *Spiritual Life in Anabaptism*, 24/23
Mudore, Constance Faye, *Tying Rocks to Clouds*, 15/23
Mueller, Melanie, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, 3/21; *Signs of Life*, 20/21
Naylor, Ruth, *Invitation to Presence*, 15/23
Nickel, Lois, *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*, 22/23
Pauls, Janice Reusser, *From Grim to Green Pastures*, 5/23
Penner, Carol, *Embodying Forgiveness*, 12/22
Penner, Larry, *Dead Man Walking*, 4/22; *Martin Luther King: Inconvenient Hero*, 7/22; *A Drink from the Stream*, 19/22; *Hymnal Companion*, 23/22
Ratzlaff, Keith, *The Snake in the Parsonage* and *Flatlands*, 3/22
Rhoades, Susan, *A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose*, 22/22
Ruth-Heffelbower, Clare Ann, *The Second Reformation*, 1/22
Ruth-Heffelbower, Duane, *Transforming Church Boards*, 9/22
Schrag, Carol, *Autumn Gospel*, 7/22
Schrag, Dale R., *The Anabaptist Story*, 24/22
Schrag, Valerie, *Nonviolence in America*, 1/23
Schroeder, Kathy, *Frank Wesley: Faith With a Brush*, 8/22
Shearer, Jody Miller, *While We Run This Race*, 1/22
Sheriff, John K., *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version*, 6/22
Showalter, Ann, *And a Time to Die*, 7/23
Shutt, Joyce, *Let All Within Us Praise!*, 23/22
Strayer, Marilynn, *Caring for the Whole Person*, 18/23
Swora, Mathew, *The Lay Ministry Revolution*, 12/22
VanderEnde, Ted, *Spirituality in an Age of Change*, 16/23
Weaver, Alain Epp, *Ishmael My Brother*, *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*, and *Religion, Law and Society*, 5/22

Wiederkehr, Ruth Isaac, ***Sexual Misconduct in Counseling and Ministry***, 10/22
Wiens, Katherine, ***Loving God***, 17/23
Yamasaki, April, ***Angels Unawares***, 11/22
Zehr, Jeannie, ***Seeking the Kingdom***, 13/23
Zuercher, Melanie, ***Visionaries***, 13/23; ***Courage Under Fire***, 16/22; ***The Spitfire Grill***, 19/22; ***Fly Away Home***, 20/21

Russia (See Commonwealth of Independent States)

Seminary

Bachman, Elda, Grandma takes Greek, 24/8
Klassen, Mary E., Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?, 8/18; AMBS celebrates 50 years, 11/18; Seminar studies congregations, 17/16
Letters, 12/8; 13/10; 15/9
Mears Driedger, June, Future uncertain for Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1/17; AMBS plans to host mission institute, 1/18; Seminaries and congregations, 15/11
Price, Tom, Sabbatical renews mediator for work in Northern Ireland, 18/20

Social Concerns

Houser, Gordon, The danger of soullessness, 19/24

South Africa

Isaac, Jean, South African women share hurts at theology conference, 4/17

South Korea

Reimer, Carla, $250,000 center dedicated in South Korea, 1/13; Big business, bad government, 1/15

Spirituality

Houser, Gordon, Are we functional atheists?, 4/24
Juhnke, Anna Kreider, Streams in the desert, 4/3
Kropf, Marlene, All shall be well, 4/8
Sportack, Laura, The example of Jesus' hands, 7/6
Waltner, Erland, From road to river spirituality, 4/6

Stewardship

Letters, 5/9; 7/8; 13/8; 15/9
Miller, J.B., A childhood story grows up, 1/12; Let's teach our children well, 3/12; The myths of immigration, 5/11; The basics of mutual funds, 7/11; Merit pay for church leaders?, 9/12; What legacy will we leave?, 11/12; Form an investment club, 13/12; A project that embraces generosity, 15/12; Let's have diversity on our boards, 17/12; Everyone needs a retirement map, 19/12; Use securities for charitable giving; 21/12; Christian shareholders have a voice, 23/12
Reimer, Carla, Giving Project hopes to build theology of money, 1/16

Sudan

Zehr, Howard, Sudanese grass roots push for peace, 2/14; Sudanese women work for peace, 2/16

Swaziland

Sensenig, Pearl, AIDS exacts toll in Swaziland, 12/13

Syria

Boers, Arthur, Majestic, centuries-old worship, 11/11; Mennonites worship in Syria, 11/17

Taiwan

Sawatzky, Sheldon, Taiwan church sends first missionary, 4/15

Tanzania

Thiessen, Carol, MEDA offers loans to Tanzanian women, 6/17

Theology

Fast, Darrell, Our God the three-in-one, 22/12; The Christ of faith in the Jesus of history, 23/10; The breath of God, 24/9
Heinrichs, Marj, In search of another side, 11/14
Heinrichs, Marj and Susan Brandt, Women hold third theology conference, 11/13
Isaac, Jean, South African women share hurts at theology conference, 4/17
Letters, 1/11; 12/8
Zuercher, Melanie A., Bethel honors native theologian, 22/13; Speaking the language, 22/24

Ukraine (See Commonwealth of Independent States)

United Nations

Rempel, John and Rebecca Kauffman, United Nations: Expanding need, contracting support, 10/18
Shirey, Melinda, Walking the bridge, 24/12

Voluntary Service

Graybill, Danielle, "I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui,'" 18/15
Houser, Gordon, Be cautious about caution, 20/24
How to apply to MVS, 11/20
MVS associate director resigns, 10/17
MVS sees drop in number of volunteers, 4/13
New MVS director named, 4/14
Reimer, Carla, VS staffs ready for merger, 4/13; Two Colorado MVS units close, 9/17; Service brings new options, perspectives, 11/19; Five decades of service: 1950s, 20/4; 1960s, 20/5; 1960s, 20/6; 1970s, 20/7; 1980s, 20/8; 1990s, 20/9; Applicants like volunteer assignments, 20/16
Reimer, Miles, Hands and feet of the gospel, 20/3
Youth gain new perspective on homeless, 18/15

Voting

Byler, J. Daryl, Voting rights, voting wrong, 19/10
Letters, 21/10

War

Groff, Gwen, Workers discuss how to work with trauma victims, 18/16

Women

Heinrichs, Marj, In search of another side, 11/14
Heinrichs, Marj and Susan Brandt, Women hold third theology conference, 11/13
Isaac, Jean, South African women share hurts at theology conference, 4/17
Sensenig, Pearl, Service that's 'women-friendly,' 19/3; At the bottom of the social heap, 19/6
Simpson, Deb, Gender is a factor in each culture, 19/7
Weaver, Valerie, Women's groups continue work of integration, 21/15

Worship

Boers, Arthur, Majestic, centuries-old worship, 11/11; Mennonites worship in Syria, 11/17
Houser, Gordon, Mennonites focus on worship, 10/13; Make worship our mission, 11/24
James, Leslie, Reflect, rejoice and respond, 11/8
Kropf, Marlene, Which way Mennonite worship?, 11/3
Letters, 13/10; 14/9; 15/9; 16/9
Neufeld, Hugo, Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?, 15/3
Penner, Larry, Songs of suffering and anticipation, 23/9
Sauder, Renee, In the grip of God's love, 11/7
Steelberg, Don, A proposal for worship in the new denomination, 11/10

Young Adults

Reimer, Carla, Young adults need community, 11/16; Church has unusual activities, 11/17; Seeing things in a new perspective, 20/17

Youth

Graybill, Danielle, "I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui,'" 18/15
Klassen, Doug, Youth ministers enriched by teacher, 13/17
Reimer, Carla, Youth minister shares tips for youth groups, 3/15; Tips from a youth sponsor, 3/16
Standing in the gap, 24/14
What parents can do, 17/9
Youth gain new perspective on homeless, 18/15
Youth raise the rafters, 17/18

Zaire

Looking for peace in Zaire, 23/17
MCC visit to Zaire reveals great need, 24/16

AUTHORS

Ahlgrim, Ryan, What are the requirements for baptism?, 9/3
Albrecht, Frank Soto, The destructive reach of war, 7/3
Anonymous, 'Inviting all to God's Table,' 15/14

Bachman, Elda, Grandma takes Greek, 24/8
Bade, Michael, *Wonder and Blue*, 13/22
Balzer, Susan, Arts weekend focuses on the body, 6/17
Bartel, Floyd G., *By the Waters of Babylon*, 11/22
Bartow, David, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 8/23
Bechtel, Trevor G. H., *Creation at Risk?*, 22/23
Bergen, Walter, A little love in a dark corner, 23/7
Bergen, Wesley, *Ezekiel*, 20/23
Block, Lynette Klassen, A life of service, 16/10
Boers, Arthur P., *Transforming Congregations for the Future*, 3/22; Pilgrim of peace in a culture at war, 5/3; *The Crown and the Fire* and *Following Jesus*, 9/22; Majestic, centuries-old worship, 11/11; Mennonites worship in Syria, 11/17; *Why We Live in Community*, 14/23; *Take and Read* and *The Bible for Everyday Life*, 20/22
Bogard, Marlene, *The Radical Reign* and *You Can't Make Me Go to Church*, 14/22
Boschmann, Erwin, A call for help, 4/11
Bowman, Ray with Eddy Hall, The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome, 12/3; Business debt vs. church debt, 12/6
Brown, Mitchell, God wants justice, mercy and humility, 6/11; *Godwrestling*, 20/22
Buller, Diane Mierau, The agony of Easter, 6/5
Bush, Perry, Drawing the line on who we are, 13/6
Buxman, Bob, Garbage and repentance, 3/8
Byler, J. Daryl, Voting rights, voting wrong, 19/10; Peace and security with justice in the Middle East, 21/24
Byler, Myrrl, China closes orphanages to foreigners, 10/19
Bystrom, Ray, Called by God in whatever you do, 16/6

Cannell, Linda, Should we eliminate Sunday school?, 18/7
Chappell, Ben, *As I Am*, 3/21; *What We Have Tasted*, 13/22

Daught, Gary, *A Non-Churchgoer's Guide to the Bible*, 2/22
Deckert, Marion, *The Abandoned Generation*, 6/23
Diaz, Octavio, Strangers in their own land, 4/10
Driedger, Kevin, *Doing Life*, 23/23
Duerksen, Norma Peters, *Growing Together*, 21/22
Dyck, Edna, *We Are the Pharisees*, 18/23
Dyck, George, *Satanic Ritual Abuse*, 6/23
Dyck, Mary, *Caregiver's Gethsemane*, 10/22

Ellison, Charlotte A., *Amazing Grace*, 17/22
Enns, Aiden Schlichting, Abuse victim speaks out, 8/17; Three colleges move closer to joining forces, 14/16
Epp, Joanne and Byron Peachey, U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines, 8/14
Epp-Tiessen, Dan, The resurrection: promise of a new body, 6/3
Eschleman, Christa, Sharing with those who mourn, 3/7

Faber, Connie, Mennonites in India: Mennonite Brethren Church, 22/7
Fast, Darrell, Our God the three-in-one, 22/12; The Christ of faith in the Jesus of history, 23/10; The breath of God,

24/9
Fast, Deborah, Atlanta Olympics try to hide the city's poor, 16/16; Atlanta unit closes after 35 years of service, 24/19
Fox, Paul C., Granny dumping, 24/3
Fransen, Sharon, Kansas last spring, 15/7
Frantz, Tom, Stones into bread?, 3/5
Franz, Shella, NDC passes resolution on church burnings, 14/18
Frey, Mark, *Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership*, 18/22
Friesen, Mel D., The real meaning of Christmas, 23/6

Gerig, Joan, *Uprooting Racism*, 16/22
Gibble, Kenneth L., Plotting the resurrection, 6/6
Good, Phyllis Pellman, A time to draw together, 2/8
Goossen, Rachel Waltner, *In Search of Unity*, 23/23
Goossen, Walfried, Pacifism: a Mennonite heresy?, 13/11
Graybill, Danielle, "I want a shirt that says, 'I love Loui,'" 18/15
Groff, Gwen, Workers discuss how to work with trauma victims, 18/16
Guarino, Jean, Be careful what you say, 17/8

Hain, Lu Ann, *Understanding Gangs*, 2/22
Hall, Eddy and Ray Bowman, The beg, borrow and 'steal' syndrome, 12/3; Business debt vs. church debt, 12/6
Hall, Eddy and Gary Morsch, Christ has no hands but ours, 16/3
Hallsted, Bill D., Vacation expenses, 12/7
Hange, Maren Tyedmers, The Table of Mary, 23/3
Harder, Mark Diller, *Living Unplugged*, 21/22
Hauder, Larry, Why I believe in conference, 8/10
Hawkley, Ken, *Rediscovering the Sacred*, 9/22
Heinrichs, Marj, In search of another side, 11/14; A little heaven on earth, 12/11
Heinrichs, Marj and Susan Brandt, Women hold third theology conference, 11/13
Herr, Judy Zimmerman, God's Wrathful Chi*ldren*, 4/22
Hieb, Barry, *Bioethics and the Future of Medicine*, 3/23
Honn, Terry, Doyle taught me about love, 15/8
Hostetler, Sheri, *Godward*, 17/22
Houk, Margaret, Christmas during sad times, 23/8; The real meaning of love, 24/6
Houser, Gordon, The color of our sin, 1/24; *The Silence of Angels*, 2/21; It's a small world, 2/24; Life in the fast(ing) lane, 3/24; Are we functional atheists?, 4/24; Violence Unveil*ed*, 5/22; All shook up, 5/24; Better business through celebration, 6/24; CHM approves proposal to look at integration of service programs, 7/17; We're all on the table, 8/24; Look beyond the sign, 9/24; Mennonites focus on worship, 10/13; We are not alone, 10/24; Make worship our mission, 11/24; Under God's reign, 13/24; Call me Mennonite, 14/24; The company you keep, 15/24; Reflect God's reign together, 16/24; Let the children come, 17/3; Bless the children, 17/24; A holy calling, 18/24; The danger of soullessness, 19/24; Be cautious about caution, 20/24; Integration Committee proposes models, 21/13; Keep awake, 23/24; *The English Patient*, 24/22; Thrown away, 24/24
Houser, Jeanne, *Raising Peaceful Children in a Violent World*, 14/22

Isaac, Jean, South African women share hurts at theology conference, 4/17

James, Leslie, Reflect, rejoice and respond, 11/8; *Words for Worship*, 15/22
Janzen, David, *Simplicity*, 7/23
Janzen, Dorothea, To be or not to be rebaptized, 9/6
Janzen, Heinz, *The Awesome Power of Shared Beliefs*, 2/22
Janzen, Jean, After the martyrs exhibit, 13/5
Juhnke, Anna Kreider, Streams in the desert, 4/3

Kauffman, Rebecca and John Rempel, United Nations: Expanding need, contracting support, 10/18
Keener, Craig, A white convert to the black church, 1/6
Kern, Kathleen, *Minor Prophets Major Themes*, 12/23
King, Jonathan and Rosalie, A humble foot washing, 3/6
King, Ronda Suderman, Lent: a time to face our dying, 3/3; Ideas for Lent, 3/5
Klassen, Dale and Beverly Lapp, *41 Ways to a Better Youth Group*, 12/23
Klassen, Doug, Youth ministers enriched by dynamic teacher, 13/17
Klassen, Mary E., Would Jesus join the Christian Coalition?, 8/18; AMBS celebrates 50 years, 11/18; Seminar studies congregations, 17/16
Knape, Jeanne, Visions of art, 15/5
Koontz, Ted, *Entrepreneurs in the Faith Community*, 21/23
Kraus, C. Norman, *Who Killed Jesus?*, 4/23; *Global Gods*, 8/22
Kroeker, Ellen, A shock of grace, passion, 19/5
Kroeker, Wally, *God on the Job*, 18/22
Kropf, Marlene, All shall be well, 4/8; Seeking God's face in prayer, 4/12; Teach a child to pray, 8/11; Which way Mennonite worship?, 11/3; Does anyone pray for enemies?, 12/9; Praying in the evening, 16/12; Praying with icons, 21/11; Create a prayer calendar, 24/11

Landis, Susan Mark, *Peace Ministry*, 6/22
Lapp, Beverly and Dale Klassen, *41 Ways to a Better Youth Group*, 12/23
Lederach, John M. and Naomi, A time for weeping in Ireland, 17/17
Lehman, Wendy, Lessons from court in Israel, 2/16; Deceptive signs of peace, 21/8
Lemons, Don S., *The Fire in the Equations*, 11/23
Liechty, Daniel, *The Royal Priesthood*, 10/23
Linscheid, Dave, Council of Commissions focuses on integration, 7/14; DGS considers fund-raising campaign and stewardship, 7/15
Logan, James Samuel, In search of a true communion, 1/3
Longhurst, John, Childhood deaths bind Winnipeg mother to Laotians, 5/14; NATO flights in Labrador double, 10/15; What's in a name?, 14/3; Proud to be a Mennonite, 14/6; MCC Canada exec approves downsizing, 14/16; Programs help keep workers off welfare, 15/18; A 10-year promise to serve overseas, 18/12
Longhurst, John and Chip Poston, First mediation center in West Bank opens, 1/15

Maffeo, Richard, The empty roar, 16/11
Mark, Ruth A., Adoption pains are preventable, 7/9
Martin, Earl, Take, this is for eating, 3/6

Martin, Mariann, What about the children?, 17/6
Mears Driedger, June, Future uncertain for Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1/17; AMBS plans to host mission institute, 1/18; Seminaries and congregations, 15/11; *The Cloister Walk*, 15/22
Meyer, Jocele, *Keeping the Garden*, 22/22
Miller, J.B., A childhood story grows up, 1/12; Let's teach our children well, 3/12; The myths of immigration, 5/11; The basics of mutual funds, 7/11; Merit pay for church leaders?, 9/12; What legacy will we leave?, 11/12; Form an investment club, 13/12; A project that embraces generosity, 15/12; Let's have diversity on our boards, 17/12; Everyone needs a retirement map, 19/12; Use securities for charitable giving; 21/12; Christian shareholders have a voice, 23/12
Montgomery, Anne, From Ur to Hebron, 14/10
Morsch, Gary with Eddy Hall, Christ has no hands but ours, 16/3
Morton, Karla, Cease Fire, 2/21; Spiritual Life in Anabaptism, 24/23
Mosher, Steve, A risky mission of mercy, 18/10
Mudore, Constance Faye, *Tying Rocks to Clouds*, 15/23
Mueller, Melanie, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, 3/21; *Signs of Life*, 20/21

Naylor, Ruth, Investment, 4/5; *Invitation to Presence*, 15/23; But to minister?, 16/5
Neufeld, Hugo, Do we welcome the marginalized in our worship?, 15/3
Nickel, Lois, *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*, 22/23
Niswander, Joanne, Godiva's watch, 7/5
Northey, Wayne, When evangelism is a heresy, 10/11
Nussbaumer, Louise, In search of Calcutta, 2/5

Pauls, Carmen, A litany for peace in Jerusalem, 21/7
Pauls, Janice Reusser, *From Grim to Green Pastures*, 5/23
Peachey, Byron, The staggering cost of landmines, 8/15
Peachey, Byron and Joanne Epp, U.S. and Canada take steps to ban landmines, 8/14
Peachey, J. Lorne, Committee suggests new name for new church, 8/13; Are we redefining pastoral leadership?, 16/13; 'Fall in love' with those you serve, 16/14
Penner, Carol, *Embodying Forgiveness*, 12/22
Penner, Larry, Kansas church closes after 95 years, 2/18; Goshen churches house homeless, 3/13; *Dead Man Walking*, 4/22; CPTers plan to ride bus route recently struck by bombers, 6/14; COM increases number of mission workers, looks to future, 7/18; *Martin Luther King: Inconvenient Hero*, 7/22; The work of belief: letting go, 7/24; A Drink from the *Stream*, 19/22; MCC boards process change, 21/17; Songs of suffering and anticipation, 23/9; *Hymnal Companion*, 23/22
Penner, Lydia, European Mennos consider future of church, 13/18; The relevance of the gospel, 14/8
Pereverzoff, Paul, Baghdad journal, 12/18
Poston, Chip and John Longhurst, First mediation center in West Bank opens, 1/15
Preheim, Rich, Pricey lawsuit derailed by new legislation, 2/14; Identity and mission, 19/11; Celebrants say that God and MDS were good, 19/13; Extra funds benefit Boligee, 19/14; Mennonites in India: United Missionary Church, 22/8; Churches face dilemma of members in military, 23/13; Boards discuss unity, new name, conventions, 23/15; Ministerial leadership merger proposal slowed, 23/16
Preheim, Vern, Six dreams for the future, 12/24
Preller, Denise, How to talk with your children about death, 10/12; Food fight, 14/11; Does God play ball?, 20/12
Price, Tom, Meeting on gambling asks, 'What's the church to do?,' 4/18; The bad with the good, 4/19; Menno preaches peace in war-torn Liberia, 9/13; Students become Liberia's ambassadors of peace, 9/14; Sabbatical renews mediator for work in Northern Ireland, 18/20; Liberian church leader feels like biblical exiles, 19/17; Menno mediator: Reconciliation is like a dance, 20/14; Fire damages church where worker will serve, 22/16; Church stresses mission all year, 22/17

Quintela, Helen Wells, Conference models an inclusive church, 15/13

Raber, Mary, A sympathy card for Easter, 3/8
Ratzlaff, Don, Welcome to literal church, 5/10
Ratzlaff, Keith, *The Snake in the Parsonage* and *Flatlands*, 3/22
Regier, Fremont, Dying with Christ on Good Friday, 3/7
Regier, Fremont and Sara, Weapons buyback works in Mozambique, 2/13
Regier, Rosella Wiens, A Jubilee journey, 18/3
Reimer, Carla, $250,000 center dedicated in South Korea, 1/13; Big business, bad government, 1/15; Giving Project hopes to build theology of money, 1/16; New curriculum gets warm reception, 2/17; Stirling Avenue involves parents, 2/18; A time for reflection and rejuvenation, 3/9; Youth minister shares tips for youth groups, 3/15; Tips from a youth sponsor, 3/16; ACT weekend renews Sunday school teachers, 3/17; VS staffs ready for merger, 4/13; Ministerial offices ready to merge, 4/14; Mexican ministers know how to evangelize, 4/17; A book with the power to shake us up, 5/6; Conference focuses on adult education, 5/18; Lessons from Mennonites in Colombia, 6/12; Living with fear and uncertainty, 6/12; Indonesian minister walks by faith, 6/19; Christians face challenges everywhere, 6/19; Pastor empowers immigrants, 6/20; Task force appointed to deal with FLP's bottom line, 7/16; Toronto: a city on a hill, 8/3; Faithful despite financial hardships, 8/4; 'We just need time,' 8/5; Do God's work regardless of risks, 8/6; 'They had strength inside them,' 8/7; Reaching out to a 'lost generation,' 8/8; Let's give the Holy Spirit more credence, 8/12; Two Colorado MVS units close, 9/17; Young adults need community, 11/16; Church has unusual activities, 11/17; Service brings new options, perspectives, 11/19; From 007 fan to ardent pacifist, 13/3; Music breaks barriers for inmates, 13/13; Kansas has chorus instead of chain gang, 13/14; A reconciler between cultures, 14/12; Ukrainians want to talk about Christianity, 14/14; 'The church is all we have for our souls,' 14/15; China churches 'full of the Spirit,' 15/16; Faith is essential for Colombian Mennonites, 15/17; Bombing brings terrorism home, 16/18; Preheim devotes life to service, 16/19; 'We've waited so long for this day,' 19/16; Five decades of service: 1950s, 20/4; 1960s, 20/5; 1960s, 20/6; 1970s, 20/7; 1980s, 20/8; 1990s,

20/9; Large churches must recognize size matters, 20/13; Applicants like volunteer assignments, 20/16; Seeing things in a new perspective, 20/17; New Hispanic director has heart for mission, 23/17; Mission school has first full-time Hopi teacher, 24/13
Reimer, Margaret Loewen, Mennonites in Europe today, 10/3; Mennonite groups in Europe (1995), 10/5; Peace church heritage lost and found, 10/6; Alternative service in Europe, 10/6; Upheavals and migrations, 10/7
Reimer, Miles, Hands and feet of the gospel, 20/3
Rempel, John, The Passion, 6/8
Rempel, John and Rebecca Kauffman, United Nations: Expanding need, contracting support, 10/18
Rempel-Burkholder, Byron, Join the outsiders, 2/11
Rhoades, Susan, *A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose*, 22/22
Rinehart, Nancy J., Ice and fire, 10/8
Risser, Christy, Church worker witnesses execution, 6/16; Work means playing games with barrio kids, 10/9; 'MK' returns to reconnect with his past, 24/18
Ross, Michael B., You can bring light to death row, 6/10
Roth, Willard E., Mennonite World Conference looks beyond 1997, 18/13; Project records non-Western Mennonite history, 18/14
Ruth, Fern Pankratz, The crucified, 6/8; Can you believe it?, 23/5
Ruth-Heffelbower, Clare Ann, *The Second Reformation*, 1/22
Ruth-Heffelbower, Duane, *Transforming Church Boards*, 9/22

Sauder, Renee, In the grip of God's love, 11/7
Sawatzky, Sheldon, Taiwan church sends first missionary, 4/15
Schrag, Carol, *Autumn Gospel*, 7/22
Schrag, Dale R., *The Anabaptist Story*, 24/22
Schrag, Valerie, *Nonviolence in America*, 1/23
Schroeder, Kathy, *Frank Wesley: Faith With a Brush*, 8/22
Sensenig, Pearl, More than 30 years of service in Calcutta, 2/12; A new window on the world, 3/11; MCC discusses workers in violent settings, 10/16; AIDS exacts toll in Swaziland, 12/13; Kenyans try to avoid Somalia's chaos, 18/18; Service that's 'women-friendly,' 19/3; At the bottom of the social heap, 19/6; Missiles fall, aid to Iraq detained, 19/15; North Korean famine exceeds Ethiopia's in '80s, 20/18; 'Strangers no more,' 22/11
Sevilla, Janice Waltner, Album, 24/7
Shantz, Marcus, A time to hear the Spirit, 2/3
Shearer, Jody Miller, *While We Run This Race*, 1/22; Project builds racial awareness, new church, 13/18
Shelly, Karl S., On the road to Jairus' house, 12/12
Shenk, Sara Wenger, How to keep our children safe, 9/11; 'More sing, Mama,' 12/10
Sheriff, John K., *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version*, 6/22
Shirey, Melinda, Walking the bridge, 24/12
Showalter, Ann, *And a Time to Die*, 7/23
Showalter, Nathan, We can learn a lot from Lot, 5/12
Shutt, Joyce, *Let All Within Us Praise!*, 23/22
Sider, Harvey R., Mennonites in India: Brethren in Christ, 22/10
Simpson, Deb, Gender is a factor in each culture, 19/7
Smucker, Donovan E., The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., 1/10
Sportack, Laura, The example of Jesus' hands, 7/6
Stauffer, Ardell, Christians killing Christians, 6/15; MCC work changes in new Haitian political order, 12/15; Mennos work on vacation in Guatemala, 18/19
Stauffer, Chris Huebert, 'As long as God gives me the strength,' 17/11
Steelberg, Don, A proposal for worship in the new denomination, 11/10
Steffen, Wayne, Conflict marks Menno history, conference finds, 13/16
Stoner, John K., The long shadow of the centurion, 7/10
Strayer, Marilynn, *Caring for the Whole Person*, 18/23
Summer, Eddie, The day the Mennonites visited me, 15/6
Swora, Mathew, Friends of Jesus, 9/8; *The Lay Ministry Revolution*, 12/22

Terichow, Gladys, Mennos help Winnipeggers on welfare get jobs, 9/15
Thiessen, Carol, MEDA offers loans to Tanzanian women, 6/17; Regular, decaf or NRSV?, 24/17

Unrau, Ruth, Mennonites in India: General Conference Mennonite Church, 22/3

VanderEnde, Ted, *Spirituality in an Age of Change*, 16/23

Waltner, Erland, From road to river spirituality, 4/6
Weaver, Alain Epp, *Ishmael My Brother*, *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*, and *Religion, Law and Society*, 5/22
Weaver, Valerie, Mennos consider ideals vs. realities of institutions, 14/13; Women's groups continue work of integration, 21/15; Mennonites in India: Mennonite Church, 22/6
Wenger, Malcolm, Native groups meet in Montana, 17/15
Wert, Carol L., Cold War reminders warmed by new friendships, 24/15
Wiebe, Menno, Harmony, 2/9; palm sunday, 6/5; preacher of the faith, 8/10; down to earth, 23/5
Wiebe, Virgil, Why not support self-destruct landmines?, 8/16
Wiederkehr, Ruth Isaac, *Sexual Misconduct in Counseling and Ministry*, 10/22
Wiens, Katherine, *Loving God*, 17/23
Wiest, Kathy Heinrichs, Drama reflects players' lives, 19/18
Will, Emily, Cheese factory goes to Siberia, 10/14; Hispanic Anabaptists meet to combine gifts, 13/15; MCCers in Haiti intervene in mob violence, 17/13; Haiti heads back into instability, 19/16
Witmer, Terry Phibbs, MCCer describes feelings in verse ("In the presence of Christ weeping"), 17/14

Yamasaki, April, *Angels Unawares*, 11/22
Yoder, Suzy, Reflections on death from a war zone, 18/11

Zehr, Howard, Sudanese grass roots push for peace, 2/14; Sudanese women work for peace, 2/16
Zehr, Jeannie, *Seeking the Kingdom*, 13/23
Zuercher, Melanie, *Visionaries*, 13/23; CMC celebrates 'life in the Spirit,' 15/15; *Courage Under Fire*, 16/22; *The Spitfire Grill*, 19/22; *Fly Away Home*, 20/21; Crying 'peace' when there is no peace, 21/3; Bethel honors native theologian, 22/13; Speaking the language, 22/24

AMBS
LIBRARY
ELKHART, IN

HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.
JULY 97
Bound -To -Please® N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962